

Proposed Residential Development at Headford Road, Ballinfoyle, Co. Galway



Screening for Environmental Impact Assessment

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SUMMARY

This report presents a Screening for Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) of a proposed residential development at Headford Road to the north of Galway City in Co. Galway. The proposed development comprises the construction of a 21-unit apartment building as well as 3 individual dwelling houses, 2 car-parking courts and a green area / sports pitch as well as other site works. The site will be drained internally and will connect to a new pumping station and there will be an underground concrete storage tank for storage of Dry Weather Flow for 24 hours for emergency purposes. Surface water will be dealt with within the site boundary via a soakaway. The soakaway will be located underneath the open space and be 5m from the boundary and other structures and swales will be constructed adjacent to roads.

The report has assessed the potential impact of the proposed development on the environment. The proposed development does not fall under any category within Schedule 5 (10) of the Planning and Development Regulations (2001) for Mandatory EIAR. The EIA Screening Assessment has determined that a sub-threshold EIAR is not required for the proposed residential development at Headford Road, Galway. The proposed development is not considered significant due to the relatively small scale and nature of the development and its footprint in the context of its environment at the outskirts of Galway City. There are no significant impacts envisaged to arise. The characteristics and sensitivities of the site and receiving environment are not considered vulnerable to significant impact from this project which is considered to be compatible with the surrounding infrastructure and approved land-use. Additionally, it is acknowledged that the potential nuisance and minor impacts that are likely to occur can be even further reduced with appropriate, best-practice mitigation measures being implemented in the construction and operational phases of the development.

The proposed site is suitable as it is located on a low quality agricultural field in the built-up outskirts of Galway City. The site is adjacent to Headford Road and there are other commercial and industrial developments in the general vicinity as well as dwelling houses along the road. There are no national monuments or features of special architectural interest at the proposed site. The area of the proposed development site is categorised as an area of 'Extreme' Groundwater Vulnerability with a regionally important aquifer in the area. For this reason there is considered some potential for water quality impacts on groundwater, mainly during construction but considering the scale and nature of the proposed residential development no unusual or particularly risky or damaging activities are involved. The sensitivity of the groundwater is considered medium and the potential impacts are considered at most moderate and therefore the significance of effects is at most moderate.

Other impacts considered relate to nuisance construction impacts which will be localised and temporary such as noise and dust generation and some slight increase in traffic in the area and a risk of invasive species introduction. It is also noted that sewage is likely to be discharged at Mutton Island from the Galway WwTP which is considered to be of medium sensitivity due to the protected Natura 2000 sites designated at Galway Bay. However, the magnitude of the impact of the additional sewage load for the proposed development is considered minor in the context of the existing environment and size of the current agglomeration. Therefore, operational waste water impacts are assessed as minor in significance. Overall, the impacts of the proposed development are considered minor and negligible in significance.

There is a quarry to the west of the proposed development site which separates the subject site from the nearby Lough Corrib SAC. A Screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) has also been undertaken for the proposed development. This Screening found that there is a potential pathway



for water quality impacts affecting the Natura 2000 network. Mitigation is deemed to be required and therefore a Natura Impact Statement is required. It is noted that the threshold for AA is lower than it is for an EIAR. Any potential impacts on Natura 2000 require AA which is provided separately. As per Directive 2014/52/EU the purpose of the EIA Screening is to *"ensure that an environmental impact assessment is only required for projects likely to have significant effects on the environment"*.

Following the current assessment the project in question is not considered likely to have significant effects on the environment. Overall, at this stage the proposed development is not expected to have any significant negative impacts on the environment. Therefore, it is concluded that a sub-threshold EIAR is not required.

Nonetheless it is noted that the likely minor / negligible nuisance impacts as well as unlikely, moderate impacts to groundwater can be minimised and / or reduced to an imperceptible level with some mitigation measures being implemented during the construction and operational phases. A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) should be drawn up for the proposed development as best practice mitigation which will ensure that the minor potential construction phase impacts, regarding contaminated run-off or leaching to groundwater, noise, dust, invasive species and waste will be effectively contained and controlled during construction works. Although the site is not considered to be of major ecological importance a biodiversity assessment prior to works could nonetheless be of benefit for the local biodiversity that may occur in the immediate surrounds. Such an assessment should be used to inform potential mitigation measures and landscaping plans for the proposed development. An operational Management Plan should be drawn up for the ongoing maintenance and management of the site also which would include measures to minimise use of pollutants and manage waste appropriately by licensed contractors. To minimise operational impacts in relation to wastewater, it will need to be confirmed that the intended treatment facility has sufficient capacity to treat the small additional load that the proposed development will generate in operation. Additionally since this site is located on a busy road there may be issues with traffic and access to the site during both the construction and operational phase. A plan will need to be prepared for this to mitigate for this.



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1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents a Screening for Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) of a proposed residential development, at Headford Road, Galway. The purpose of the report is to determine if Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required for the proposed development as set out in the mandatory and discretionary provisions of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2019 (Unofficial Consolidation) (annotated) 30th May 2019. The requirement for a 'sub-threshold' development to be subject to EIA is determined by the likelihood that the development would result in *significant* environmental effects which may arise due to the location of the development or the characteristics of the development. The EIA screening exercise outlined below has examined the project with reference to the relevant thresholds and criteria.

The 'Screening stage' ascertains whether the project's effects on the environment are expected to be significant, i.e. the project is 'Screened' to determine whether an EIA is necessary. Projects listed in Annex I of the Directive are automatically subjected to an EIA because their environmental effects are presumed to be significant. Projects listed in Annex II of the Directive require a determination to be made about their likely significant environmental effects. The Member State's Competent Authority make that determination through either a (i) case-by-case examination or (ii) set thresholds or criteria.

The purpose of Screening is to determine whether or not an EIA is required for a particular project listed in Annex II of the EIA Directive. Projects listed in Annex II will hereafter be referred to as 'Annex II Projects'. Screening has to implement the Directive's overall aim, i.e. to determine if a project listed in Annex II is likely to have significant effects on the environment and, therefore, be made subject to a requirement for Development Consent and an assessment, with regards to its effects on the environment. At the same time, Screening should ensure that an EIA is carried out only for those Projects for which it is thought that a significant impact on the environment is possible, thereby ensuring a more efficient use of both public and private resources. Hence, Screening has to strike the right balance between the above two objectives.

This report meets the requirements of Directive 2014/52/EU and has been prepared with regard to the relevant guidelines from the European Commission, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government and EPA. This report has been prepared to allow the Competent Authority (CA) to prepare an EIAR Screening Conclusion Statement.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

The proposed development site is a vacant site in the Ballinfoyle area of the outskirts of Galway City. The proposed development site is located to the north of Galway City on the west side of Headford Road (N84) just over c. 3km north of Eyre Square in the center of the city. The subject site is c. 2.6km south-east of Lough Corrib. Ballindooly Lough is just over c. 0.5km northeast of the subject site.

There is a quarry site c. 60m to the west side of the proposed development site. There is also a garage and machinery yard immediately to the south of the proposed development. An industrial complex including large premises / factories of companies including the Clada Group bottling plant and Western Beverages Limited is located on the opposite side (east) of the Headford Road to the proposed development. A number of residential dwellings exist along Headford Road to the north of the proposed development.

The proposed development site is on an area of limestone bedrock near the surface, and is classed as an Extreme 'X' groundwater vulnerability area. The propose site is also over an area with a regionally



important aquifer (karstified). The site consists of mainly Wet Grassland habitat (GS4) with some Scrub (WS1) sections, most likely used for livestock grazing.

A site visit was undertaken on June 10 2021. Hares were recorded on the site and there was evidence of breeding. This site appears to be groundwater drained with runoff draining onto Headford Rd.



Figure 1 Location of proposed Development at Headford Road, Galway, Co. Galway.



3. EIA SCREENING METHODOLOGY

3.1 Legislation

This EIAR screening report has been prepared to meet the requirements of EU Directive 2014/52/EU and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2019 (Unofficial Consolidation) (annotated) 30th May 2019. The requirements for Screening are contained in Article 4 of the EIA Directive, Annex IIA, and Annex III to the Directive. The relevant provisions of Article 4 are cited below.

Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU

Article 4(2)

[...] for projects listed in Annex II, Member States shall determine whether the project shall be made subject to an assessment in accordance with Articles 5 to 10. Member States shall make that determination through:

- (a) a case-by-case examination; or*
- (b) thresholds or criteria set by the Member State.*

Member States may decide to apply both procedures referred to in points (a) and (b).

Article 4(3)

Where a case-by-case examination is carried out or thresholds or criteria are set for the purpose of paragraph 2, the relevant criteria set out in Annex III shall be taken into account. Member States may set thresholds or criteria to determine when projects need not undergo either the determination under paragraphs 4 and 5 or an environmental impact assessment, and/or thresholds or criteria to determine when projects shall in any case be made subject to an environmental impact assessment without undergoing a determination set out under paragraphs 4 and 5.

Article 4(4)

Where Member States decide to require a determination for projects listed in Annex II, the developer shall provide information on the characteristics of the project and its likely significant effects on the environment. The detailed list of information to be provided is specified in Annex IIA. The developer shall take into account, where relevant, the available results of other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment carried out pursuant to Union legislation other than this Directive. The developer may also provide a description of any features of the project and/or measures envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment.

Article 4(5)

The competent authority shall make its determination, on the basis of the information provided by the developer in accordance with paragraph 4 taking into account, where relevant, the results of preliminary verifications or assessments of the effects on the environment carried out pursuant to Union legislation other than this Directive. The determination shall be made available to the public and:

- (a) where it is decided that an environmental impact assessment is required, state the main reasons for requiring such assessment with reference to the relevant criteria listed in Annex III; or*
- (b) where it is decided that an environmental impact assessment is not required, state the main reasons for not requiring such assessment with reference to the relevant criteria listed in Annex III, and, where proposed by the developer, state any features of the project and/or measures envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment.*

Article 4(6)

Member States shall ensure that the competent authority makes its determination as soon as possible and within a period of time not exceeding 90 days from the date on which the developer has submitted all the information required pursuant to paragraph 4. In exceptional cases, for instance relating to the nature, complexity, location or size of the project, the competent authority may extend that deadline to make its



determination; in that event, the competent authority shall inform the developer in writing of the reasons justifying the extension and of the date when its determination is expected.

While Article 4(2) defines a common Screening approach, to be adopted by Member States, Article 4(3) requires that the competent authorities consider relevant criteria when deciding whether EIA is needed, i.e. the type/characteristics and size of Projects, the sensitivity of Project locations, as well as the potential impacts the Project may trigger. These criteria are listed in Annex III to the Directive. Where Member States require that a case-by case examination be conducted for Annex II Projects in their national legislation, then the Developer must submit the information required about the Project in accordance with the detailed requirements in Annex IIA to the Directive (see Article 4(4)). The Developer shall, when submitting the information, take the available results or data from other relevant assessments of effects on the environment, carried out pursuant to other EU legislation than the EIA Directive (e.g. SEA, see the Annex to this Guidance Document on Links with Other EU Instruments), into account. Furthermore, the Developer may enclose information about the Project's features and the measures envisaged to avoid or prevent potential significant adverse effects on the environment. The Competent Authority in Member States must issue its decision, on whether a proposed Annex II Project is to be subjected to the EIA procedure or not, based on the information provided by the Developer in accordance with the detailed requirements in Annex IIA (see Article 4(5)). The authority is also required to take any other relevant assessments, carried out on the effects on the environment pursuant to other EU legislation than the EIA Directive, into account. Finally, the Competent Authority must make its decision on whether EIA is required or not within the time period specified in Article 4(6).

The 2014 revisions to the EIA Directive introduced several amendments (e.g. to Annex III, which lays down the criteria to determine whether the Projects listed in Annex II should be subject to an EIA) and added a number of new provisions to the Screening process, including a timeframe within which the Member State's Competent Authority must reach a decision on whether an EIA is required or not. A new Annex IIA is to be used in the case of screening determination (i.e. information to be provided by the developer on projects listed in Annex II), which consists of:

A description of the project, including in particular:

- a. A description of the physical characteristics of the whole project and, where relevant, of demolition works;
- b. A description of the location of the project, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas, likely to be affected.

A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the project.

A description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, or the project on the environment resulting from:

- a. The expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant;
- b. The use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity.

The criteria of Annex III shall be taken into account, where relevant, when compiling the information in accordance with points 1 to 3.

The Directive also amends Annex III "Selection Criteria referred to in Article 4(3)". The details to be considered in the new Annex III are as follows:

Characteristics of proposed development:

The characteristics of project, with particular regard to:



- the size and design of the whole project,
- cumulation with other existing and / or approved development,
- the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;
- the production of waste,
- pollution and nuisances,
- the risk of major accidents and / or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate changes, in accordance with scientific knowledge
- the risk to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution).

Location of proposed development:

The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by projects must be considered, with particular regard to:

- the existing and approved land use,
- the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground,
- the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:
 - (a) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;
 - (b) coastal zones and the marine environment;
 - (c) mountain and forest areas,
 - (d) nature reserves and parks,
 - (e) areas classified or protected under national legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated by Member States pursuant to Directives 92/43/EEC and 2009/147/EC,
 - (f) areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards, laid down in Union legislation and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure,
 - (g) densely populated areas,
 - (h) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.

Type and Characteristics of potential impacts:

The likely significant effects on the environment proposed development in relation to criteria set out under paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Annex, with regard to the impact of the project on the factors specified in Article 3(1), taking into account:

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

In compliance with the requirements of 2014/52/EU, this EIAR Screening Report provides details of the information specified in Annex IIA, taking account of the criteria in Annex III.

3.2 Guidance

The following guidance has been followed during the preparation of the current EIAR screening report:



- European Commission (2017a) Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects: Guidance on Screening.
- European Commission (2017b) Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects: Guidance on the preparation of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report.
- Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (2018) Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment.
- EPA (2017) Draft Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (EIAR).
- European Commission (2001) Guidance on EIA Screening.

In Figure 2 the step-by-step guide of the main steps involved in EIAR screening are illustrated (from EPA, 2017).

3.3 Consultation

No consultation was undertaken as part of the current EIAR Screening report. This report has been prepared to allow the Competent Authority (CA) to prepare an EIAR Screening Conclusion Statement.

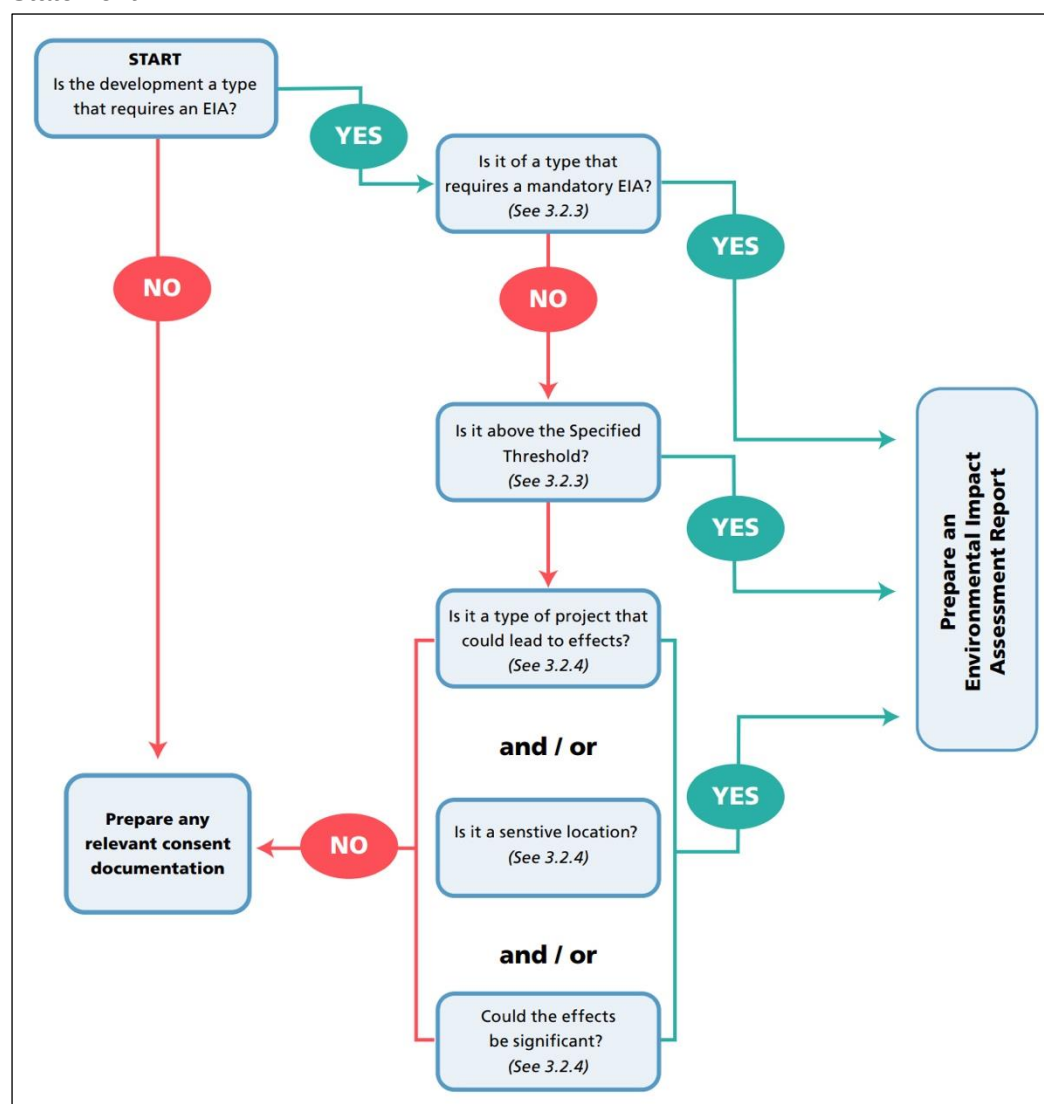


Figure 2 Step-by-step guide of the main steps involved in EIAR screening (from EPA, 2017).



4. PROJECT INFORMATION REQUIRED BY ANNEX II (A) OF 2014/ 52/ EU

4.1 Description of Project

4.1.1 Physical Characteristics of the Project

The proposed development comprises the construction of a housing development (including excavation and levelling of existing sloped ground profile) with ancillary site services on a greenfield site on the Headford Road to the north of Galway City. The proposed development includes a 3-storey apartment building with 21no. apartment units as well as 3no. dwelling houses. The houses will be detached 4-bedroom units with an adjacent hardstand area and a rear garden for each. There will be 2no. car-parking courts, a 12-space court to the west of the apartment building and a 20-space court to the south of the apartments and the east of the proposed dwelling houses. The proposed development also includes an amenity sports pitch / green area a bin store area, a pumping station, perimeter railings, walls, supplementary tree planting and planted terraces, a maintenance access route, property entrances from Headford Road and onsite vehicle and pedestrian roads / paths / surfaces.

An Engineering Report has been prepared by Galway City Council in May 2021 that outlines the civil and structural design of the project (Galway City Council, 2021). This Stage 1 Report outlines design standards for the Road Layout, Storm Water Management, Surface Water Design, Foul Drainage Design, Water Supply and Site Flood Risk. Regarding foul drainage, the site will be drained internally and will connect to a new pumping station which will be constructed on site. This will also include an underground concrete storage tank for storage of Dry Weather Flow for 24 hours for emergency purposes. The report also outlines that a pre-connection inquiry has been sent to Irish Water (Galway City Council, 2021). For surface water, it is proposed to manage, intercept, treat and contain all surface water within the site boundary via a soakaway. The soakaway will be located underneath the open space and be 5m from the boundary and other structures. Swales will be constructed adjacent to roads where suitable green space is available, including gullies along roads. Further details of the watermain connection, main entrance road and structural details of the proposed houses are provided in the Engineering Report (Galway City Council, 2021).

4.1.2 Location of the Project, with regard to Environmental Sensitivities

Figure 2 and 3 show the location of the proposed development site in relation to environmentally and / or geographically important areas in the locality.

The nearest designated Natura 2000 site to the proposed development is Lough Corrib SAC (000297). The SAC boundary and potential limestone pavement which is a qualifying interest of the SAC is located c. 200m to the north-west of the proposed development site. A quarry site is situated between the proposed development and the designated SAC. The boundary of the Lough Corrib SPA (004042) is located at the main Lough Corrib waterbody c. 2.6km north-west of the proposed development site. Galway Bay Complex SAC (000268) and the Inner Galway Bay SPA (004031) are also located within 3km of the proposed development also. Both of these sites are c. 2.3km south of the proposed development site at the closest point at Lough Atalia in Galway City. Creggana Marsh SPA (004142) is the only other Natura 2000 site within 10km of the proposed development. This SPA is c. 8.4km south-east of the proposed development site.

There are no watercourses flowing through the proposed development site which would provide direct hydrological pathways to these designated sites. However, the proposed development site is on an



area of 'Extreme' groundwater vulnerability over limestone with a regionally important aquifer in the area too. The nearest waterbody is a small unnamed lake (EPA Segment: 30_507) situated c. 240m north-east of the proposed development site. Ballindooly Lough is located just over c. 500m north-east of the subject site. Lough Corrib is located c. 2.6km north-west of the proposed development also. The River Corrib downstream of Lough Corrib does not come within less than 2km of the proposed development site.

Lough Corrib NHA (000297) is located c. 1.2km west of the proposed development site. Galway Bay Complex NHA (000268) is c. 2.2km south of the proposed development site. Moycullen Bogs NHA (002364) is the only other NHA within a 5km radius of the proposed development site which is situated 4.1km west of the proposed development.

There are no individual protected and sensitive features or structures on the proposed development site or in the immediate vicinity.

4.2 Description of Aspects of the Environment likely to be Significantly Affected

The most likely negative effects on the environment, in the absence of appropriate mitigation measures in place, are;

- Increased demand on the community's recreation and amenity services;
- Construction and operational traffic resulting in a possible increase in traffic congestion to local road networks;
- Water quality impacts from construction run-off and groundwater contamination;
- Population growth and increased urban habitation resulting in increased foul and storm water discharges to the public sewers and municipal sewage treatment plant waste infrastructure, potentially incapable of meeting demand;
- Increased water usage from the development impacting on water supply resources;
- Habitat loss and wildlife disturbance in the vicinity of the proposed development.

The most significant positive effects on the environment will be the provision of residential units in the outskirts of Galway City to meet the housing demands of a larger population.

4.3 Description of likely Significant Effects on the Environment

4.3.1 Expected Residues and Emissions and the Production of Waste

The expected residues, emissions and waste are typical of such construction works. Residues and emissions from the construction phase of the development will be related to construction waste and dust generation, emissions from construction plant and potential water contamination from surface run-off or groundwater contamination. It is noted that the GSI Groundwater Vulnerability Status of the site is 'Extreme – with rock at or near the surface' and there is a regionally important aquifer (Karstified (conduit)) present in the area too. The proposed development will require excavation works and due to the nature of the works there is considered to be the potential to intercept or affect groundwater.

Emissions will be linked to air conditioning and heating systems and are expected to fall within regulated standards for modern residential developments. Operational waste generated will be domestic waste from the residential units. The proposed development will also result in increased



sewage loading in the Galway City area, which is served by the Galway WwTP. The Galway WwTP which discharges into the Galway Bay at Mutton Island.

4.3.2 Use of Natural Resources, in particular Soil, Land, Water and Biodiversity

The land take required for the proposed development is considered relatively small. The site is also not considered to be of particular importance in terms of biodiversity. Therefore the use of the proposed area of land is not considered to have a significant impact in terms of direct loss of important biodiversity. Natural resources, such as stone, gravel, water may be used for the construction phase of the project. This will be a short-term demand and otherwise, during the operational phase of the development, there will be no out of the ordinary use of natural resources.

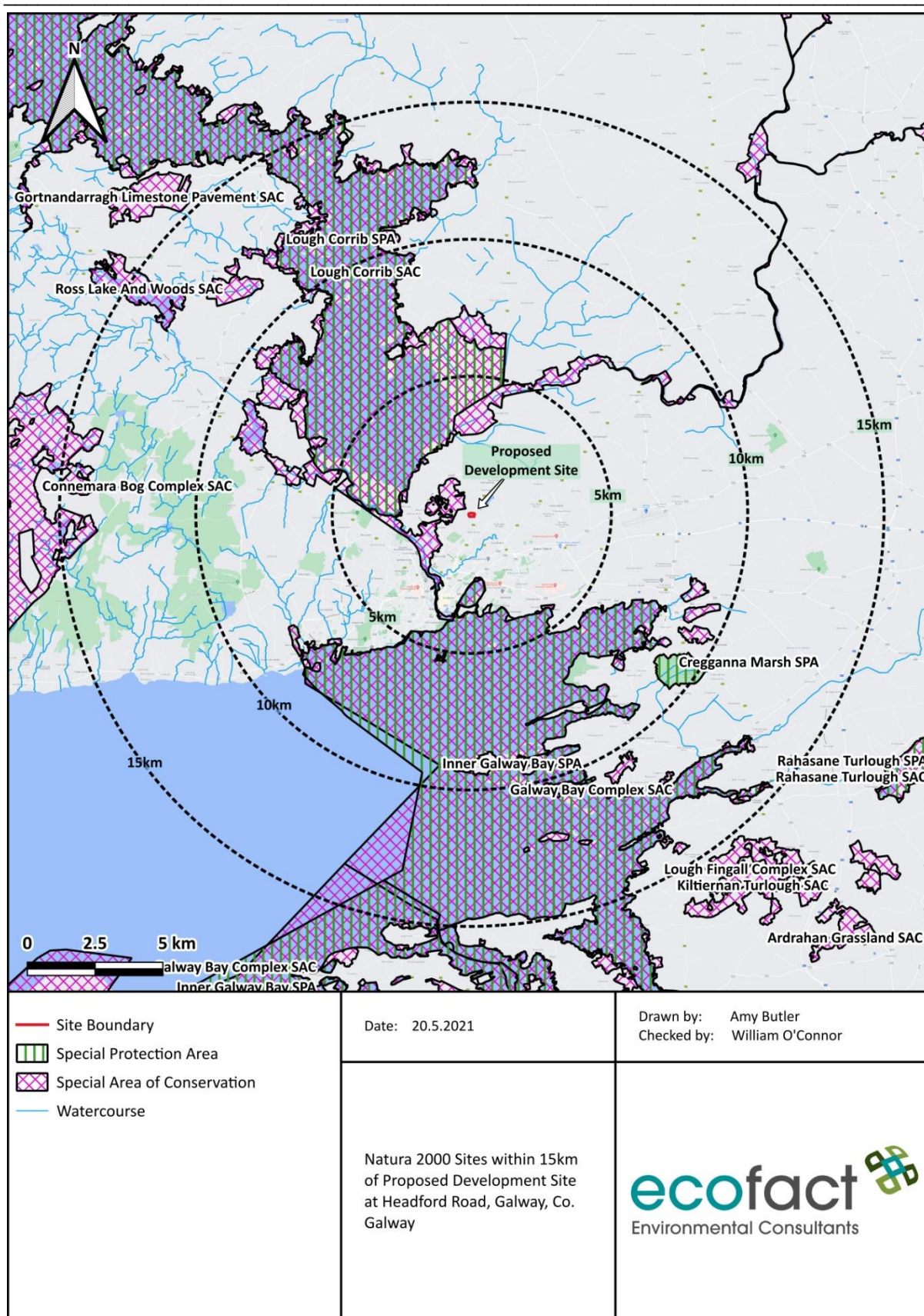


Figure 3 Natura 2000 Sites within 15km of the proposed development at Headford Road, Galway, Co. Galway.

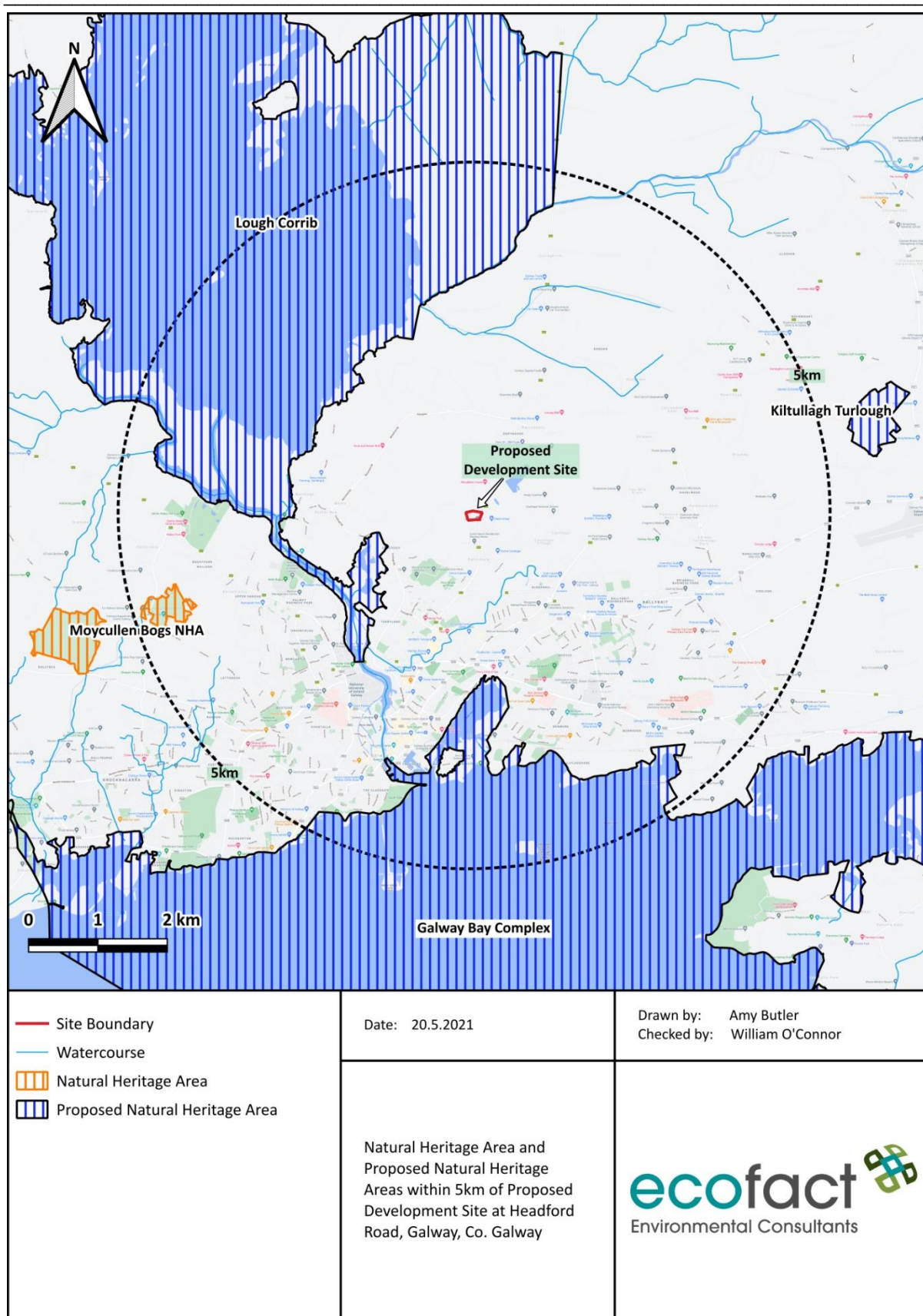


Figure 4 Natural Heritage Areas (None present) and Proposed Natural Heritage Areas within 5km of the proposed development at Headford Road, Galway, Co. Galway.



5. EIAR SCREENING

5.1 Screening for Mandatory EIAR

5.1.1 Requirement – Schedule 5 (10)

The proposed development falls under the category of 'Infrastructure Project' within Schedule 5 (10) (b) of the Planning and Development Regulations; which provides that a mandatory EIAR must be carried out for the following projects:

(b)

- (I). Construction of more than 500 dwellings
- (II). Construction of a car-park providing more than 400 spaces, other than a car-park providing as part of, and incidental to the primary purpose of, development.
- (III). Construction of a shopping centre with a gross floor space exceeding 10,000 m².
- (IV). Urban development which would involve an area greater than 2 hectares in the case of a business district, 10 hectares in the case of other parts of a built-up area and 20 hectares elsewhere.

(In this paragraph, "business district" means a district within a city or town in which the predominant land use is retail or commercial use.)

5.1.2 Assessment

The proposed development has a relatively small footprint and is situated in the outskirts of Galway City in a relatively built up area but not in a business district. The proposed development site is just over 2.4 hectares in area. The proposed development involves that construction of 21 apartment and 3 dwelling houses. The proposed development does not fall under any category in Schedule 5 (10) of the Planning and Development Regulations (2001) for Mandatory EIAR. The number of accommodation units falls below the threshold of 500 dwellings. The site area also falls well below the area threshold of 10 hectares, for sites in built-up areas. Therefore, the site does not trigger a requirement for a mandatory EIAR.

5.2 Screening for sub-threshold EIAR

Development projects which are below the threshold of requiring an EIAR as set out in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) may still require an EIAR. Schedule 7 of the Regulations details the criteria that the planning authority must consider in determining whether a sub-threshold EIAR should be undertaken. This schedule is a direct transposition of Annex III of EU Directive 2011/92/EU. The EU Directive 2014/52/EU provides a revised Annex III and its transposition into national legislation is mandatory. Accordingly, Table 1, attached, provides screening statement of the proposed development against the Annex III criteria of 2014/52/EU. These criteria come under three broad headings; Characteristics of projects; Location of Projects; and Types and characteristics of the potential impact. According to the Directive "The screening procedure should ensure that an environmental impact assessment is only required for projects likely to have significant effects on the environment". A significant effect is "an effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment" (EPA, 2017). Based on the information provided in accordance with Annex IIA and Annex III of the 2014 Directive, and following the relevant European Commission guidelines for EIA (European Commission, 2017 a, b, c), it is considered that a sub-threshold EIAR is not required for the proposed development, as overall the likely impacts are considered not to have long-term and significant negative effects such that would trigger EIAR.



Table 1 Screening for sub-threshold EIAR for the proposed cycle scheme development between Quinn's Cross and Raheen Roundabout in Co. Limerick.

Criteria for assessment of EIA sub-threshold	Construction Impacts	Operational Impacts	Conclusion
A Characteristics of proposed development The characteristics of the proposed development, in particular			
- the size and design of the whole project	The proposed housing development is a relatively small scale development. The proposed development site is c. 2.4ha in size at the edge of the urban centre of Galway City with industrial properties and other residential properties in the area. The proposed design includes perimeter landscaping and boundaries containing the development while including appropriate connection to the existing road infrastructure of Headford Road. Based on the size and design the construction impacts are considered to be localised and easily managed. They will be short-term in duration while construction is underway. The proposed development site is considered of low sensitivity and the magnitude of the impacts are moderate. Therefore, the significance of effects is considered minor.	The proposed residential development is located in a built-up area at the outskirts of Galway City. There are numerous other residential properties along Headford Road there are also several commercial and industrial units and factories in the vicinity. The proposed development size and design, which includes an apartment building and 3 individual houses, is considered compatible with the area and existing infrastructure. Given the size and design of the proposed development the sensitivity of the receiving environment is low and the magnitude of the impact is considered at most moderate. Therefore, the significance of effects is considered minor.	Minor effects of construction and operation – No significant negative impacts.
- cumulation with other existing and / or proposed development	There are no other known major construction projects in the immediate proximity to the proposed site that are likely to impact in-combination with the construction process. Some of the nuisance impacts such as noise and dust generation and emissions from machinery may add slightly to such impacts from local industrial facilities (e.g. local quarries, factories, garages etc.) but overall no major contribution to any significant cumulative impacts is envisaged. The magnitude of the proposed development's contribution to such impacts is considered to be minor. The sensitivity of the environment to these effects is low considering the built-up	The proposed development may contribute to some impacts associated with urban habitation for example increased traffic, increased domestic waste, increased human activity and noise. However, given the existing developments and built-up nature of the surrounding environment these impacts will not have any significant impact or have a major effect in the context of the existing environment. It is noted however that the operational waste water from the proposed development is likely to add to loading at Galway WwTP which discharges to the more sensitive receiving environment of the designated SAC and SPA at Mutton Island. This could potentially result in minor cumulative water	Negligible effects of construction and operation – No significant negative impacts.



Criteria for assessment of EIA sub-threshold	Construction Impacts	Operational Impacts	Conclusion
	nature of the area. Therefore, the significance of effects is considered negligible.	quality impacts. The magnitude of the proposed development's contribution to such impacts is considered to be minor. The sensitivity of the environment at the proposed development site is low but at the potential wastewater discharge point is medium. The proposed development is considered to have an overall minor effect in terms of cumulative impacts.	
- the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity	Energy, including electricity and fuels, will be required during the construction phase. The construction process will include the use of various raw materials. No out of the ordinary use of natural resources is likely during the construction process. The land take required for the proposed development is considered relatively small. The site is also not considered to be of particular importance in terms of biodiversity. Therefore the use of the proposed area of land is not considered to have a significant impact in terms of direct loss of important biodiversity.	The land resource of the proposed site will be used for residential purposes in the operation of the proposed development. This function is considered suitable for the site location and compatible with the surrounding infrastructure. During the operational phase there will be water use, consumption of electricity and energy, related to the occupancy of the completed residential units. The domestic use of the resources is expected to be of a normal residential level. No out of the ordinary use of natural resources is likely during the operation phase. The sensitivity of the receiving environment is low and the magnitude of the impact is considered at most moderate. Therefore, the significance of effects is considered minor.	Minor effects of construction and operation – No significant negative impacts.
- the production of waste	Waste will be generated during the construction phase related to excavation and site clearance as well as and other general construction waste. These impacts are typical of such construction projects and will be short-term during the construction period. The sensitivity of the receiving environment is low and the magnitude of the impact is considered moderate. Therefore, the significance of effects is considered minor.	Waste generated in the operational phase will be typical domestic waste from the residential units and suitable waste storage facilities are included in the proposed design (bin store) to contain waste. The proposed development is considered to increase demand on waste management / disposal services to a minor extent. The sensitivity of the receiving environment is low and the magnitude of the impact is considered minor. Therefore, the significance of effects is considered negligible.	Minor effects of construction and negligible effects of operation – No significant negative impacts.



Criteria for assessment of EIA sub-threshold	Construction Impacts	Operational Impacts	Conclusion
- pollution and nuisances	Typical nuisance impacts can be expected from the construction phase, relating to the production of dust, noise and vibrations, invasive species, water quality and potential increase in construction traffic in the locality of the proposed development site on Headford Road on a short-term basis while works are ongoing. The proposed development is not expected to generate any abnormal conditions for such construction projects. The magnitude of the likely impacts are not considered to have an adverse affect over a significant area or duration. The impacts will be limited to a localised area and a temporary duration during the works. In terms of water quality impacts there is no watercourse on the site or in the immediate vicinity that would be affected by surface run-off. However, water quality impacts via groundwater contamination are considered a potential risk due to the extreme groundwater vulnerability of the area. The sensitivity of the environment to such impacts is therefore considered medium. The magnitude of the impacts is considered minor. Therefore, the significance of effects is considered minor.	No out of the ordinary pollution or nuisance impacts are expected to arise from the proposed development. The increased noise and traffic associated with the proposed housing development is considered to be localised and of a minor magnitude. Similarly, any potential pollution risk is considered minor and relating to typical domestic waste management concerns of a relatively small scale. The sensitivity of the receiving environment to these impacts is considered low at the proposed development site. However, it is noted that wastewater from the proposed development is likely to be treated at Galway WwTP which discharges to Galway Bay at Mutton Island which is a designated SAC and SPA. Therefore, the receiving environment is classed as medium in terms of sensitivity. The magnitude of the impact is minor and the sensitivity of the receiving environment is considered moderate. Therefore, the significance of effects is considered minor.	Minor effects of construction and operation – No significant negative impacts.
- 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	There is considered to be a risk of typical construction related accidents. No major disasters are considered likely. The impacts and risks of such accidents are considered to be localised and short-term while construction works are underway. Overall, the impacts are considered to be of a minor magnitude and the sensitivity of the environment is low. Therefore, the significance of this risk is considered negligible.	There is no unusual characteristics of the proposed development that would cause particular concern in relation to the risk of major accidents or disasters. No major accidents / disasters are foreseen. The impacts are considered to be of a minor magnitude and the sensitivity of the environment is low. Therefore, the significance of this risk is considered negligible.	Negligible effects of construction and operation – No significant negative impacts.



Criteria for assessment of EIA sub-threshold	Construction Impacts	Operational Impacts	Conclusion
- the risks to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution).	Some nuisance noise and dust at a localised scale for a temporary period is expected. The extreme groundwater vulnerability of the site contributes to the assessment of the sensitivity of the receiving environment in terms of water contamination as being of medium sensitivity. However, no major risks to human health are envisaged with the proposed construction works. The magnitude of potential impacts is considered minor. The sensitivity of the environment is considered medium. Therefore, the significance of this risk is considered minor.	The proposed development is expected to be connected to existing public water and sewer infrastructure used by the other local residential properties. Risks to human health are considered minor and the sensitivity of the environment is low. Therefore, the significance of this risk is considered negligible.	Minor effects of construction and negligible effects of operation – No significant negative impacts.
B Location of proposed development The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by proposed			
development, with particular regard to:			
- the existing and approved land use	The proposed development site is zoned for residential development in the Zoning Development Plan (2017-2023) for Galway City. The proposed residential development is therefore appropriate for the proposed site and satisfies the approved land use for the site.	The proposed development is compatible with the environment and land use in the area. It will improve the residential capacity of the area and will positively contribute to the residential development of the area for which it is zoned for in the Zoning Development Plan (2017-2023) for Galway City.	The proposed development is compatible with the existing and approved land use – No significant negative impacts.
- the relative abundance, availability quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground;	The site is not considered to be of any major importance in terms of biodiversity. The site is a low quality agriculture pasture beside a busy road in built-up area. It is not considered to be of particular ecological significance. Some minor impacts on local biodiversity relating to low quality habitat loss and some vegetation removal and temporary disturbance in the immediate vicinity during works will result from the proposed works, but no significant impacts in terms of biodiversity is envisaged.	Ongoing during operation the proposed development site will serve the function of residential use which is what the land is zoned for. Impacts on biodiversity are considered negligible as any increase in human activity that may disturb the local biodiversity will be buffered with the perimeter planting and boundaries as well as taking into account that the immediate vicinity of the site is not likely to be of significant importance for biodiversity and therefore not particularly sensitive. There is a regionally important karstified limestone aquifer at this location and so the site is	Moderate effects of construction and minor effects of operation – No significant negative impacts.



Criteria for assessment of EIA sub-threshold	Construction Impacts	Operational Impacts	Conclusion
	The land resource to be used is relatively small in size (c. 2.4 ha) and is zoned for residential development. There is a regionally important aquifer underground and the GSI groundwater data viewer maps show the site as being of Groundwater Vulnerability Status of 'Extreme' vulnerability. The proposed construction is considered relatively small in scale. Excavation works is required to level the site but deep excavation such as that associated with mining or quarrying is not involved. Therefore, the magnitude of the potential impact is considered moderate and the sensitivity of the groundwater is considered medium. Effects on groundwater are considered moderate.	considered of medium sensitivity, however, during operation no significant risks to groundwater is anticipated. Some minor impacts of typical domestic and traffic related contaminant leaching is considered but no major pollutant use or damaging activities is envisaged. In the context of the surrounding environment with several other hard stand areas and sites, no significant impacts from the proposed residential development is envisaged. The magnitude of the potential operational impact is considered minor and the sensitivity of the groundwater is considered medium. Effects on groundwater are therefore considered minor.	
the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying attention to the following areas: a) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths; b) coastal zones and the marine environment; c) mountain and forest areas; d) nature reserves and parks; e) areas classified or protected under national legislation, Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC; f) areas in which there has	a) The proposed development is not within or directly connected to any wetlands, riparian areas or river mouths. The site is not in a floodplain and is not at risk of flooding. Ground water is of an Extreme vulnerability status and there is an aquifer in the area however, so there is a low risk of impacts on watercourses via possible groundwater connection. Given the scale of works and the lack of direct hydrological connection to watercourses, impacts are considered of, at most, moderate magnitude and these areas are of low sensitivity due to the separation. Therefore effects are minor. (b) The proposed site is not located in the vicinity of the coast or any marine environment. The nearest such environment is the Corrib	The purpose of the proposed development will act in line with the adjacent environment. The proposed development is located in the built-up area adjacent Headford Road in the outskirts of Galway City with other residential and commercial and industrial properties in the area. The development is relatively small in scale and compatible with the existing environment and therefore the main effects of the operation of the proposed residential development will be easily absorbed. It is noted that wastewater from the proposed development is likely to be treated at Galway WwTP which discharges directly to Galway Bay at Mutton Island. The receiving environment is classed as medium in terms of sensitivity as although the size	A separate 'Screening for Appropriate Assessment' report has been prepared for the proposed development to address potential impacts of Natura 2000 sites (Ecofact, 2021). Otherwise, minor effects of construction due to a low risk of groundwater connection to watercourses / water dependent habitats and minor effects of operation relating to wastewater



Criteria for assessment of EIA sub-threshold	Construction Impacts	Operational Impacts	Conclusion
already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards laid down in Union legislation and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure; g) densely populated areas, h) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.	Estuary at Galway Bay at the opposite side of Galway City, over 2km south of the proposed development. There is no watercourse flowing through the proposed development site that provides a pathway to the River Corrib upstream of the estuary either which is also over 2km from the proposed development site to the west. Therefore, due to the considerable separation the proposed development construction will not impact on coastal zones or marine environments. (c) The proposed development is not within or directly connected to any mountain or forest areas. There is no known pathway between the site and mountain or forest areas. (d) The proposed development is not within or directly connected to any nature reserves or parks. There is no known pathway between the site and nature reserves or parks. (e) The subject site is not within any protected habitats. The nearest protected area is Lough Corrib SAC (000297) which is located c. 200m to the north-west. Galway Bay Complex SAC (000268) and the Inner Galway Bay SPA (004031) are the next closest sites, both are c. 2.3km south of the proposed development site at the closest point. Also within the 5km radius of the proposed development is the Lough Corrib SPA (004042) which is c. 2.6km north-west. Creggana Marsh SPA (004142) is the only other Natura 2000 site within 10km of the proposed development at c. 8.4km to the south-east. A separate 'Screening for Appropriate Assessment' report has been prepared for the proposed development and this did identify the need for mitigation, and therefore the requirement for an NIS was outlined (Ecofact, 2021).	of the receiving waterbody is large and thereby, has a considerable absorption capacity it is also ecological important and designated as both an SAC and SPA. Due to the relatively small scale of the development the magnitude of the impact would be considered minor. The magnitude of potential impacts is considered minor. The sensitivity of the environment is considered medium. Therefore, the significance of this risk is considered minor.	discharge at Mutton Island – No significant negative impacts.



Criteria for assessment of EIA sub-threshold	Construction Impacts	Operational Impacts	Conclusion
	(f) There are no areas associated with the development in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards laid down in Union legislation and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure. (g) The proposed development is located near other residential dwellings however the proposed development is in the outskirts of Galway City and the population density is not significantly high. (h) The nearest historic monument record to the proposed development is c. 250 south of the proposed development site which is a redundant record. Other records are located within a Quarry site over 400m west of the proposed development. There are some also some records in the vicinity of Ballindoooley Lough which is further again from the proposed development site. There are no national historic monuments or features of special architectural interest within the proposed site or in the immediate vicinity and no impacts on such are expected.		
C Type and Characteristics of potential impacts The likely significant effects of projects on the environment must be considered in relation to criteria set out under paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Annex, with regard to the impact of the project on the factors specified in Article 3(1), taking into account:			
- the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	The proposed development is considered a relatively small scale project in the context of the local environment. The proposed development site is c. 2.4 ha in size. There may be some slight increase in traffic on the	The proposed development is a relatively small scale development in the context of the location at the outskirts of Galway City. The development provides 21 apartment units and 3 houses. There are other residential properties along Headford	Minor effects of construction and operation – No significant negative impacts.



Criteria for assessment of EIA sub-threshold	Construction Impacts	Operational Impacts	Conclusion
	Headford Road during construction but due to the small scale and location at a vacant site off the road no significant delays or congestion is anticipated. There are other residential dwellings in the general area along Headford Road but the immediate surrounds of the proposed development site is not considered particularly densely populated such that would raise concerns in terms of any more than some nuisance impacts such as some increased noise levels for a temporary period. Such nuisance impacts will also be largely localised and confined mainly to close proximity of the proposed works. The sensitivity of the receiving environment in general is low and the magnitude of the impact is considered at most moderate. Therefore, the significance of effects is considered minor.	Road as well as large commercial / industrial facilities. The proposed development site is zoned for residential development and the size of the proposed development is considered appropriate for the location where there is substantial human habitation but not in a heavily, densely populated zone. The operation of the proposed development is suited to the existing infrastructure and environment. In terms of its magnitude and spatial extent the proposed development is considered minor.	
- the nature of the impact;	The nature of the impacts from the construction phase, are related to temporary nuisance impacts in terms of; noise, dust, vibrations, and contaminant run-off / leaching, invasive species introduction and slight traffic increase. No out of the ordinary or excessively dangerous / damaging impacts are anticipated. The sensitivity of the receiving environment in general is low and the magnitude of the impact is considered at most moderate. Therefore, the significance of effects is considered minor.	The operational phase will result in the development of permanent residential accommodation and ancillary services. The nature of the use is appropriate to the location and proximity to existing infrastructure. Any adverse impacts or pressures will be of a minor magnitude considering the nature of the proposed development and context of the proposed development in a suitable environment. The sensitivity of the receiving environment in general is low and the magnitude of the impact is considered minor. Therefore, the significance of effects is considered negligible.	Minor effects of construction and negligible effects of operation – No significant negative impacts.
- the transboundary nature of the impact	Construction impacts are considered to be very localised. There are no construction phase transboundary impacts anticipated.	There are no operational phase transboundary impacts anticipated.	No significant negative impacts.
- the intensity and complexity of the impact	The intensity and complexity of the construction phase is in keeping with modern construction projects. The proposed development is for a relatively small scale residential complex and is considered	The operational phase of the proposed development is of a small scale and will be easily managed with existing infrastructure given the location in the built-up area. Impacts will comprise minor effects relating to typical impacts	Minor effects of construction and negligible effects of operation – No significant negative impacts.



Criteria for assessment of EIA sub-threshold	Construction Impacts	Operational Impacts	Conclusion
	compatible with the environment in a built-up area adjacent to a busy road in the outskirts of the city. In terms of the intensity / complexity of the proposed development the sensitivity of the receiving environment in general is low and the magnitude of the impact of construction is considered at most moderate. Therefore, the significance of effects is considered minor.	of such residential development which is compatible with the environment. In terms of the intensity / complexity of the proposed development the sensitivity of the receiving environment is low and the magnitude of the operational impacts is minor. Therefore, the significance of effects in this regard is considered negligible.	
- the probability of the impact	It is likely that some level of construction impacts will occur in relation to nuisance impacts. The impacts expected to occur are considered moderate at most. There is also some risk of groundwater contamination. Overall impacts of minor significance are expected to occur with a lower risk of moderate effects in relation to groundwater.	The proposed development will inevitably have an impact on the proposed development site due to the change of use of the site and will bring about some increase in human activity and associated impacts such as slight increases in noise, traffic, domestic waste, potential pollutant run-off / leaching etc. The impacts that will occur are considered very minor and will be easily absorbed in the context of the existing environment and its low sensitivity. There is also some risk of water quality impacts in relation to waste water discharge. Sewage is likely to be treated appropriately but there is nonetheless some risk of impacts with the minor additional loading of the proposed development on the WwTP which discharges to a more sensitive environment of protected habitat. Overall the environment is not considered sensitive to the likely impacts which are considered of a minor magnitude. However, the receiving environment of the sewage discharge is slightly more sensitive and considered medium in sensitivity. Considering the impacts in terms of their probability to occur the effects of the proposed development are of minor significance.	Minor effects of construction with some risk of moderate impact on groundwater and minor effects of operation – No significant negative impacts.
- the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact.	The construction impacts will not commence until all relevant permission are obtained for the proposed development; the proposed works are expected to be short term. Works are expected	The proposed development is expected to be permanently occupied post-construction. The impacts associated with its operation will therefore be ongoing but are minor in scale and compatible	Minor effects of construction and of operation – No significant negative impacts.



Criteria for assessment of EIA sub-threshold	Construction Impacts	Operational Impacts	Conclusion
	to take place during standard hours of operation. Construction related impacts are expected to be short-term and no permanent negative impacts are anticipated. In terms of the onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of construction impacts the significance of the effects are minor.	with existing infrastructure and the approved land use. Overall in terms of the onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of construction impacts the significance of the effects are minor.	
- the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved projects;	There are no other known major construction projects in the immediate proximity to the proposed site that are likely to impact in combination with the construction process. Some of the nuisance impacts such as noise and dust generation and emissions from machinery may add slightly to such impacts from local industrial facilities (e.g. local quarries, factories, garages etc.) but overall no major contribution to any significant cumulative impacts is envisaged. The magnitude of the proposed development's contribution to such impacts is considered to be minor. The sensitivity of the environment to these effects is low considering the built-up nature of the area. Therefore, the significance of effects is considered negligible.	The development is expected to be occupied permanently once completed and any associated impacts will therefore be permanent. The ongoing impacts are considered to be minor impacts due to the small scale of the proposed development. The environment in the vicinity of the proposed development is considered to be of low sensitivity to the potential cumulative impacts but additional sewage loading could potentially add to pressure of other wastewater discharge at Mutton Island where the receiving environment is more sensitive. The magnitude of the proposed development's contribution to such impacts is considered to be minor. The sensitivity of the environment at the proposed development site is low but at the potential wastewater discharge point is medium. The proposed development is considered to have an overall minor effect in terms of cumulative impacts.	Negligible effects of construction and minor effects of operation – No significant negative impacts.
- the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.	It is considered that the construction impacts are not considered to result in significant negative effects. Nonetheless it is also acknowledged that the identified impacts which are mostly nuisance impacts, which are largely localised to the proposed development site and immediate surrounds, can be easily managed and even further reduced. Suitable assessments can be undertaken which can inform and add to plans and procedures	The impacts associated with the proposed developments operation relate mainly to typical residential development impacts such as waste generation and some possible use of chemical pollutants such as herbicides and contamination of surface run-off or leaching. It is considered that the impacts are generally considered of minor or negligible significance. It is considered that appropriate operational management guidelines and procedures could be implemented that would easily reduce the impact further.	No significant negative impacts are expected from either construction or operation, It is nonetheless considered that most of the impacts could be effectively reduced further and minimised with appropriate measures in place.



Criteria for assessment of EIA sub-threshold	Construction Impacts	Operational Impacts	Conclusion
	which should also be drawn up and implemented for the proposed construction to mitigate any of the impacts identified.		



6. EIAR Screening Conclusion

This report has been prepared to allow the Competent Authority (CA) to prepare an EIAR Screening Conclusion Statement. The report has assessed the potential impact of the proposed development on the environment. The proposed development does not fall under any category within Schedule 5 (10) of the Planning and Development Regulations (2001) for Mandatory EIAR. The screening exercise has been completed in this report and the methodology used has been informed by the available guidance, legislation and directives.

The EIA Screening Assessment has determined that a sub-threshold EIAR is not required for the proposed residential development at Headford Road, Galway. The proposed development is not considered significant due to the relatively small scale and nature of the development and its footprint in the context of its environment at the outskirts of Galway City. There are no significant impacts envisaged to arise. The characteristics and sensitivities of the site and receiving environment are not considered vulnerable to significant impact from this project which is considered to be compatible with the surrounding infrastructure and approved land-use. Additionally it is acknowledged that the potential nuisance and minor impacts that are likely to occur can be even further reduced with appropriate, best-practice mitigation measures being implemented in the construction and operational phases of the development.

The proposed site is suitable as it is located on a low quality agricultural field in the built-up outskirts of Galway City. The site is adjacent to Headford Road and there are other commercial and industrial developments in the general vicinity as well as dwelling houses along the road. There are no national monuments or features of special architectural interest at the proposed site. The area is considered to be of 'Extreme' groundwater vulnerability, however, the proposed development is not considered to result in any significant groundwater contamination or pollution. Effects on groundwater are considered to be moderate. The impacts expected to arise are typical of such residential developments and relate mainly to minor effects of nuisance construction impacts and domestic waste and wastewater generation.

There is a quarry to the west of the proposed development site which separates the subject site from the nearby Lough Corrib SAC. A Screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) has also been undertaken for the proposed development. This Screening found that there is a potential pathway for water quality impacts affecting the Natura 2000 network. Mitigation is deemed to be required and therefore a Natura Impact Statement is required. It is noted that the threshold for AA is lower than it is for an EIAR. Any potential impacts on Natura 2000 require AA which is provided separately. As per Directive 2014/52/EU the purpose of the EIA Screening is to *"ensure that an environmental impact assessment is only required for projects likely to have significant effects on the environment"*.

Following the current assessment the project in question is not considered likely to have significant effects on the environment. Overall, at this stage the proposed development is not expected to have any significant negative impacts on the environment. Therefore, it is concluded that a sub-threshold EIAR is not required.

Nonetheless it is noted that the likely minor / negligible nuisance impacts as well as unlikely, moderate impacts to groundwater can be minimised and / or reduced to an imperceptible level with some mitigation measures being implemented during the construction and operational phases. A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) should be drawn up for the proposed development as best practice mitigation which will ensure that the minor potential construction



phase impacts, regarding contaminated run-off or leaching to groundwater, noise, dust, invasive species and waste will be effectively contained and controlled during construction works. Although the site is not considered to be of major ecological importance a biodiversity assessment prior to works could nonetheless be of benefit for the local biodiversity that may occur in the immediate surrounds. Such an assessment should be used to inform potential mitigation measures and landscaping plans for the proposed development. An operational Management Plan should be drawn up for the ongoing maintenance and management of the site also which would include measures to minimise use of pollutants and manage waste appropriately by licensed contractors. To minimise operational impacts in relation to wastewater, it will need to be confirmed that the intended treatment facility has sufficient capacity to treat the small additional load that the proposed development will generate in operation. Additionally since this site is located on a busy road there may be issues with traffic and access to the site during both the construction and operational phase. A plan will need to be prepared for this to mitigate for this.



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PLATES



Plate 1 The proposed development site at Headford Rd, Co. Galway.



Plate 2 Current access road to the proposed site with scrub habitat shown. Site use is primarily agricultural and hares were recorded breeding on the site.