

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING REPORT

FOR LEITRIM COUNTY COUNCIL

AT
MAIN ST, DRUMSNA,
CO. LEITRIM



Prepared for

Leitrim County Council

Prepared by

Traynor Environmental Ltd

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This report refers, within the limitations stated, to the condition of the site at the time of the report. No warranty is given as to the possibility of future changes in the condition of the site. The report as presented is based on the information sources as detailed in this report, and hence maybe subject to review in the future if more information is obtained or scientific understanding changes.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Traynor Environmental Ltd. were commissioned by Leitrim County Council, to undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening of a proposed development at Main St, Drumsna,, Co. Leitrim Traynor Environmental Ltd have, as part of this commission, carried out this Screening for EIA to determine whether the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) is required for the proposed development. The findings of the EIA screening assessment are presented in this report.

1.1 Project Brief

Planning permission is sought for change of use for:

Construction of 2 storey Apartment building to consist of 2 no. 1 bed units at ground floor and 2 no. 1 bed units at first floor located at Main Street, Drumsna, County Leitrim. The proposed development will also consist of new site entrance, car parking spaces, boundary wall/fence, footpaths, private open spaces, bin storages, landscaping, formation of new connections to existing foul/surface water drainage and existing utilities and all associated site works and services.

This report has been prepared by Traynor Environmental Ltd in accordance with published guidance to document the Screening of whether an Environmental Impact Assessment is required for the development.

1.2 Methodology

The screening process followed in this report is in accordance with the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council as amended by 2014/52/EU and follows the format as per Section 3.2 of the EPA Guidelines (2022). The potential for significant effects of the proposed Project has been considered against Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 as amended.

The key steps to screen for an EIA is set out in Section 3.2 of the EPA Guidelines are as follows:

- Is the development a type that requires EIA?
- Is it of a type that requires mandatory EIA?
- Is it above the specified threshold?
- Is it a type of project that could lead to effects? and/or
- Is it a sensitive location? and/or
- Could the effects be significant?

The information required to be submitted by the developer for the Planning Authority to make a determination on EIA Screening is set out in Schedule 7A of the Regulations of 2001 (see also Annex IIA of the EIA Directive).

However, it is important to note that Schedule 7A states *'The compilation of the information at paragraphs 1 to 3 [of Schedule 7A] shall take into account, where relevant, the criteria set out in Schedule*

7.¹ Having regard to this for the purposes of compiling the relevant information on the likely effects of the proposed development and in order to address points 4 to 6 above, an evaluation of the characteristics of the project, the sensitivity of the location of the proposed development, and the potential for significant impacts has been made with regard to Schedule 7 of the Regulations.

Schedule 7 of the Regulations of 2001 sets out the criteria for the Planning Authority to determine whether a development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment. The criteria is broadly set out under the three main headings:

1) Characteristics of proposed development

- a. *the size and design of the whole of the proposed development,*
- b. *cumulation with other existing development and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment,*
- c. *the nature of any associated demolition works,*
- d. *the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity,*
- e. *the production of waste,*
- f. *pollution and nuisances,*
- g. *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, and*
- h. *the risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution).*

2) Location of proposed development

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

3) Types and Characteristics of Potential Impacts

- a. *the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example, geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),*
- b. *the nature of the impact,*
- c. *the transboundary nature of the impact,*
- d. *the intensity and complexity of the impact,*
- e. *the probability of the impact,*
- f. *the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact,*
- g. *the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment, and*
- h. *the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.*

The information required to be submitted by the developer for Leitrim County Council to make a determination on EIA Screening is set out in Schedule 7A of the Regulation, which transposes Annex IIA of the EU Directive.

However, it is important to note that Schedule 7A states 'The compilation of the information at paragraphs 1 to 3 [of Schedule 7A] shall take into account, where relevant, the criteria set out in Schedule 7.' The main body of this report (Sections 3.0, 4.0 and 5.0) will cover Schedule 7A fully, but it has been set out to present the information under the headings provided for in Schedule 7 in order to assist the Planning Authority in its screening assessment.

1.3 Screening Evaluation

1.3.1 Is the Development a Project

The first step in screening is to examine whether the proposal is a project as understood by the EU Directive. For the purposes of the EU Directive, 'project' means:

- the execution of construction works or of other installations or schemes, or
- other interventions in the natural surroundings and landscape including those involving the extraction of mineral resources.

The EPA Guidance (2022) states that if a proposed project is not of a type covered by the Directive, there is no statutory requirement for it to be subject to environmental impact assessment. In determining if the proposed project is of a type covered by the Directive it may be necessary to go beyond the general description of the project and to consider the component parts of the project and/or any processes arising from it. If any such parts or processes are significant and, in their own right, fall within a class of development covered by the Directive, the proposed Project as a whole may fall within the requirements of the Directive.

Each element of the proposed development has been examined and the development clearly meets the definition of a Project as understood by the EU Directive.

1.3.2 Is the Development a Project that Requires a Mandatory EIA

The next step is to determine if the proposed development is of a project type that requires mandatory EIA (i.e. is the proposed development of a project type in which a thresholds do not exist). The types of projects to which thresholds do not apply are types that are considered to always be likely to have significant effects.

Ireland's type of projects for which an EIA is mandatory is set out in the Schedule 5 Part 1 and Part 2 of the Regulations. An EIA is deemed mandatory under Section 172 of the Act to accompany a planning application for development for the types of projects set out in Schedule 5. This list was developed from Annex I and Annex II of the EIA Directive. The EPA Guidance (2022) requires an assessment beyond the general description of the project and to consider the component parts of the project and/or any processes arising from it.

In considering the wider context and the component parts of the project the proposed development the thresholds of relevance to the proposal from Part 2 of Schedule 5 are set out below:

10. Infrastructure projects –

(b)(i) Construction of more than 500 dwelling units;

(b)(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).

15. Any project listed in this Part which does not exceed a quantity, area or other limit specified in this Part in respect of the relevant class of development but which would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7.

For the project types Class 10 (a) to (m) an EIA is mandatory only if the project equals or exceeds, as the case may be, a limit, quantity or threshold set out. Project Class 15 does not set out any thresholds and a case-by-case assessment is required to be undertaken.

1.3.3 Is the Project Above the Threshold for EIA

An EIAR is required to accompany an application for permission of a class set out in the Schedule 5 Part 1 and Part 2 of the Regulations which equals or exceeds, as the case may be, a limit, quantity or threshold set for that class of development. A development that does not exceed a limit, quantity or threshold set for that class of development in Schedule 5 of the Regulations is known as a 'sub-threshold development'. The proposed development and component parts have been considered against the thresholds outlined in Schedule 5, Part 2 Class 10 (a) to (m). The most relevant project type in the context of the proposed development is Class 10 (b) (i), (ii) and (iv) noted in Section 2.2 above. Under Class 10 (b) (i) the threshold is 'more than 500 dwelling units'. Under Class 10 (b) (iv) the appropriate threshold is

considered to be '2 hectares in the case of a business district'. The proposed development site is c. 0.1ha. The proposed development site is not equal to, nor does it exceed the limit, quantity or threshold set out in Class 10(b) (i) and (iv); therefore, an EIA is not mandatory.

1.3.4 Conclusion – Sub Threshold Development

The proposed development is 'of a type set out in Part 2 of Schedule 5 [in the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended)] which does not equal or exceed, as the case may be, a quantity, area or other limit specified in that Schedule in respect of the relevant class of development'. The development is outside the mandatory requirements for EIA, and is considered to be sub-threshold for the relevant project type.

An EIA Report is still required by Section 172 of the Act, and Schedule 5, Part 2, Class 15 of the Regulations to accompany a planning application for sub-threshold development which would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7. Therefore, the final step in the screening process is to consider the need for an EIA on a discretionary basis.

Article 4(4) of Directive 2014/52/EU, requires the developer to provide information on the characteristics of the project and its likely significant effects on the environment, to allow the competent authorities to make a determination on the requirement for an EIA. The information required is set out in Annex II A of the Directive and transposed Schedule 7A of the Regulations. The remainder of this report presents the information required by Schedule 7A to demonstrate the likely effects on the environment, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7.

The following Sections provide information on the characteristics of the proposed development; the location and context, and its likely impact on the environment. These sub sections also include in accordance with Article 299B(1)(c) a description of any features, if any, of the proposed development and the measures, if any, envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment of the development.

These sections present the information required under Schedule 7A of the Regulations, broadly set out in the structure Schedule 7 to ensure that each aspect for consideration is robustly addressed.

1.3.5 Requirement of Screening

The purpose of this report is , to provide the Leitrim County Council with the information required under Schedule 7A to demonstrate the likely effects on the environment, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

There is a mandatory requirement for an EIAR to accompany a planning application for some types of development that meet or exceed the "thresholds". In addition to the mandatory requirement, there is a case-by-case assessment necessary for sub- threshold developments as they may be likely to have significant effects on the environment. If a sub-threshold development is determined to be likely to have significant effect on the environment, then an EIAR will be required.

The proposed development and component parts have been considered, as documented in Section 2 & 3, against the thresholds for EIA as outlined in of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended). The proposed development is a sub-threshold development and is not mandatory for EIA.

Traynor Environmental Ltd. have undertaken an assessment of the effects on the environment from the proposed development and has concluded that there are no likely significant environmental effects which would warrant preparation of an EIAR. The assessment covers each aspect of the environment in accordance with guidance including; Population and Human Health; Biodiversity; Land, Soils, Geology, Hydrogeology, and Hydrology; Air Quality and Climate; Noise and Vibration; Landscape and Visual Impact; Cultural Heritage, and Archaeology; Traffic and Transportation; Material Assets, and Waste.

1.4 Statement of Competency

This EIAR Screening report was carried out by Nevin Traynor Environmental Scientist BSc Env. of Traynor Environmental Ltd. The company was established in 2004. Nevin has an honours degree in Environmental Science from Sligo IT. Nevin has over 18 year's experience as an Environmental Consultant in Ireland.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Overview

Leitrim County Council are seeking permission for the construction of a proposed residential development at a site at Main St, Drumsna, Co. Leitrim. Permission for the works will be sought under Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001. The proposed development will consist of:

Construction of 2 storey Apartment building to consist of 2 no. 1 bed units at ground floor and 2 no. 1 bed units at first floor located at Main Street, Drumsna, County Leitrim. The proposed development will also consist of new site entrance, car parking spaces, boundary wall/fence, footpaths, private open spaces, bin storages, landscaping, formation of new connections to existing foul/surface water drainage and existing utilities and all associated site works and services.

2.2 Site Location and surrounding environment

The application site is a greenfield site of 0.1ha and it located in the village of Drumsna. Access to site will be via the creation of an entrance that is just off Main St. The site is bounded to the south-east by Main St, to the north-east and south-west by separate residential sites and to the north-west by agricultural lands. The land-use in the area surrounding the site is mixed. The land-use associated with the village of Drumsna largely consists of residential and small commercial uses and the habitats associated with these areas include buildings and artificial surfaces and amenity grasslands and gardens. Beyond these areas, agriculture is the dominant land use and the main habitat associated with this use is improved/semi-improved agricultural grasslands. Other natural habitats represented in the rural areas include wet grasslands, mixed woodlands, hedgerows, treelines and watercourses. The site is 195m east of the River Shannon

Figure 1 – Site Location Map

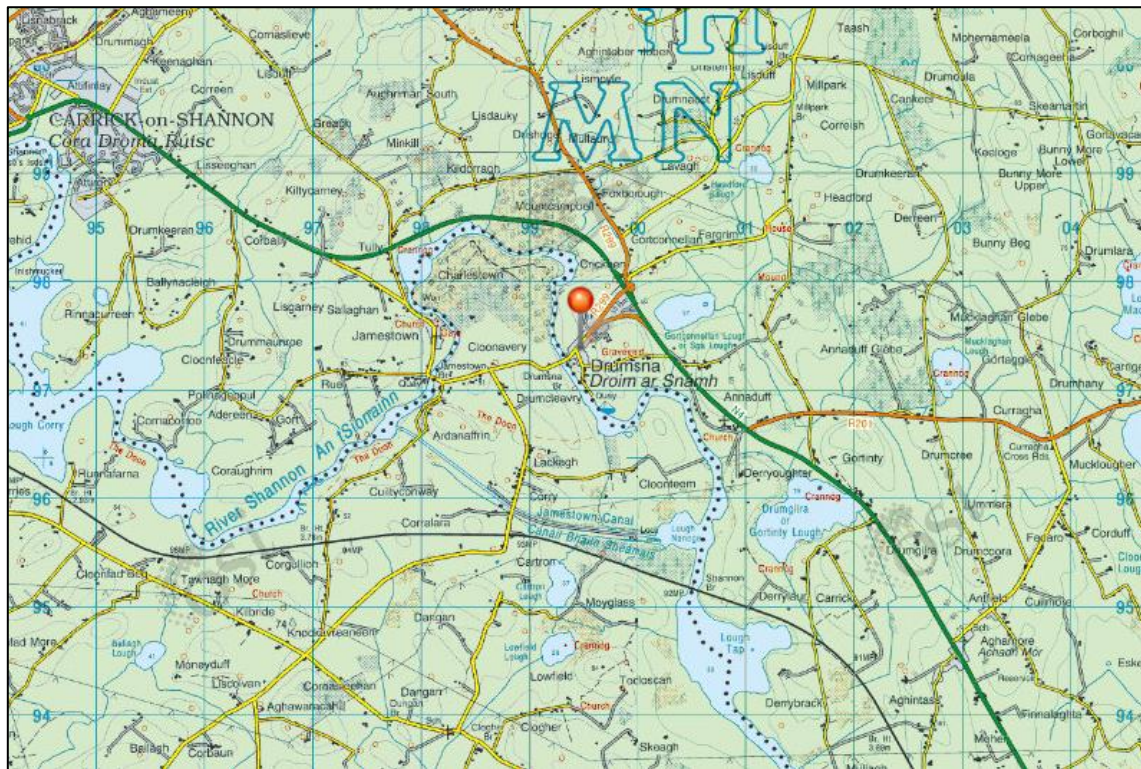


Figure 2 – Site Location Map (Site Outlined in Red)

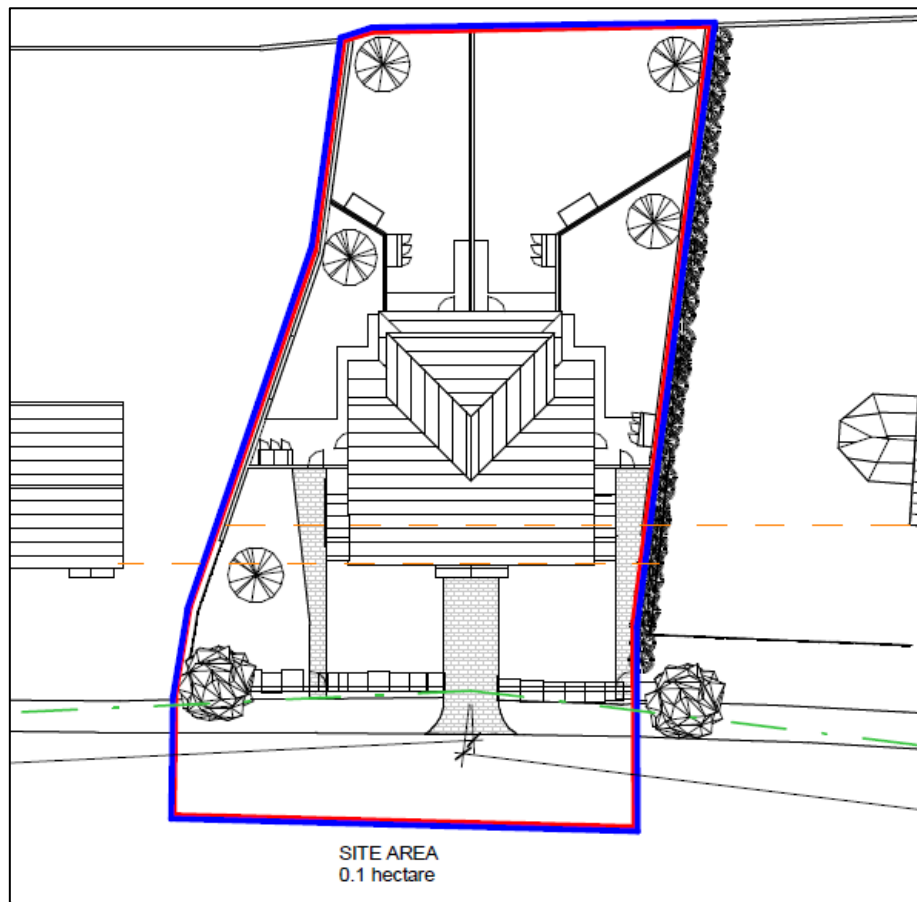


Figure 3 – Aerial Photograph of the Site (Outlined in Red) and its Surrounding Habitats.



2.3 Water Features and Quality

The application site is located within the Upper Shannon Hydrometric Area (26) and Catchment (26C), the Shannon (Upper) Sub-Catchment (040) and Sub-Basin (070). There are no drains or streams within or adjacent to the application sites. There are drains 47m to the west of the site, whilst the River Shannon is 195m west of the site at its closest point.

The EPA have classed the ecological status of the River Shannon at points upstream and downstream of Drumsna as moderate. Under the requirements of the Water Framework Directive this is unsatisfactory and status must be restored to good within a specified time frame (2027).

Figure 4 – Local Watercourses and flow Directions (GIS EPA Maps).

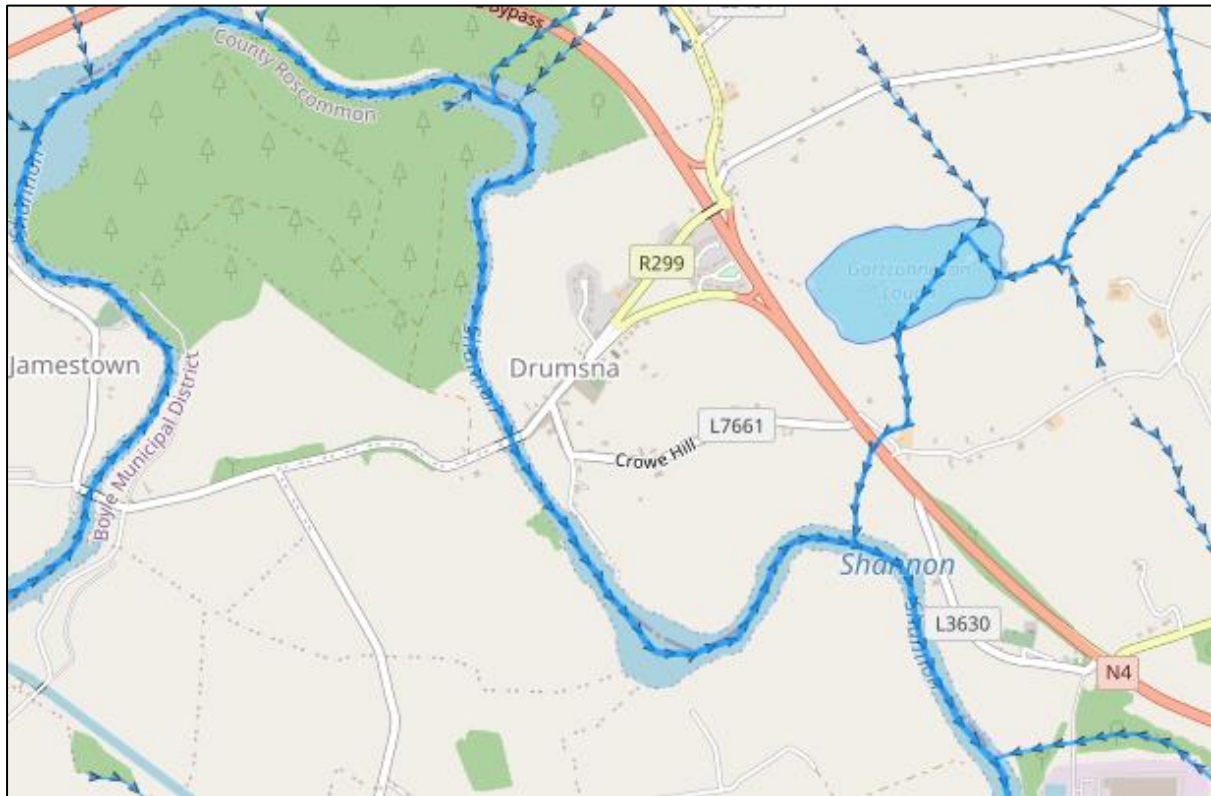
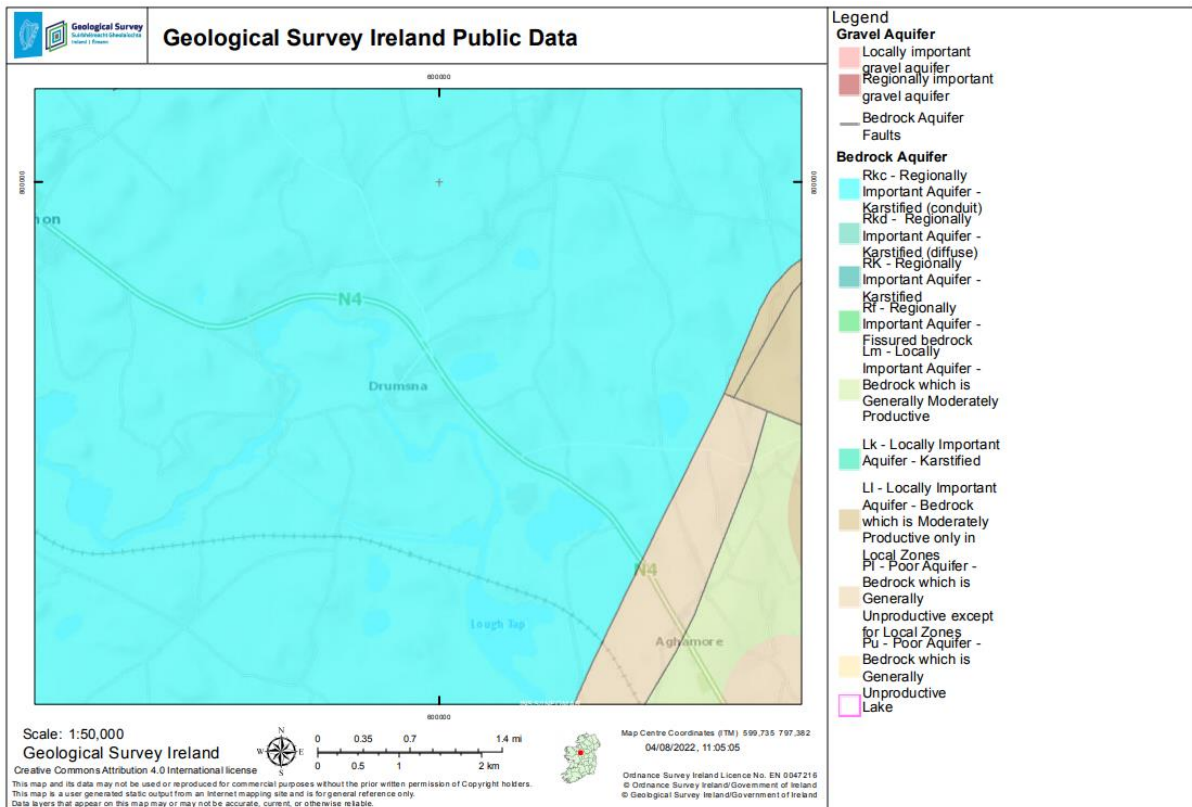
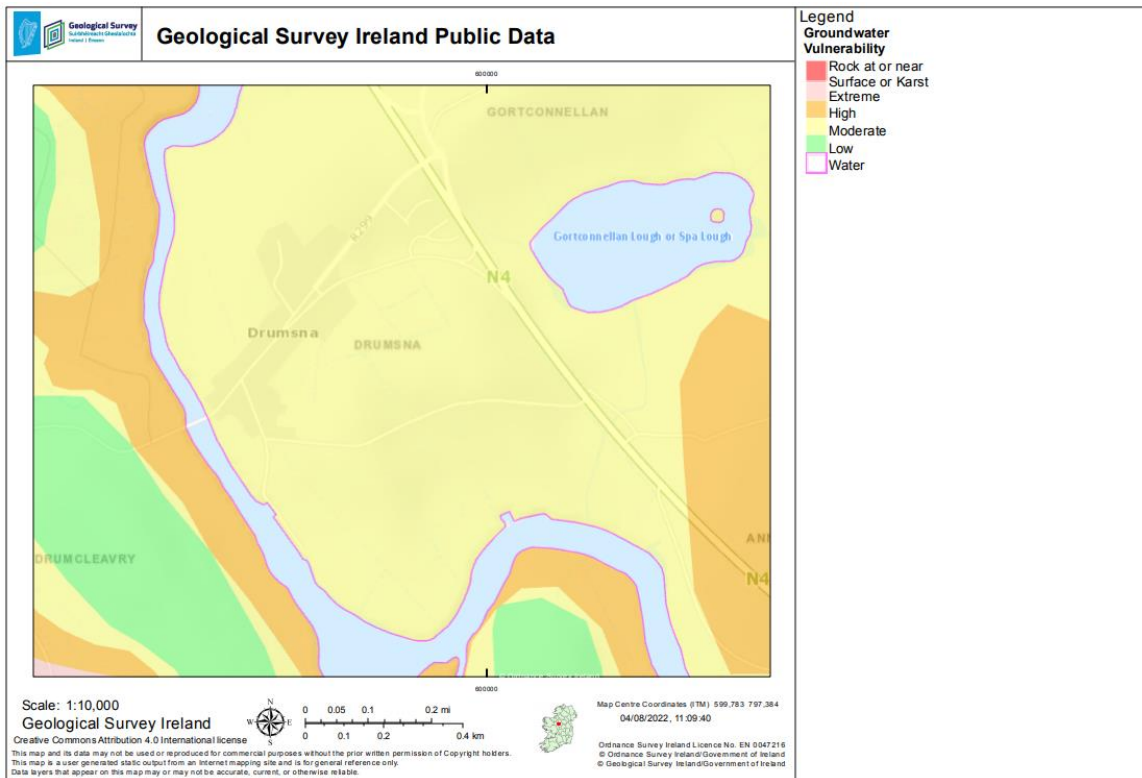


Figure 5 - Groundwater/Aquifer Map



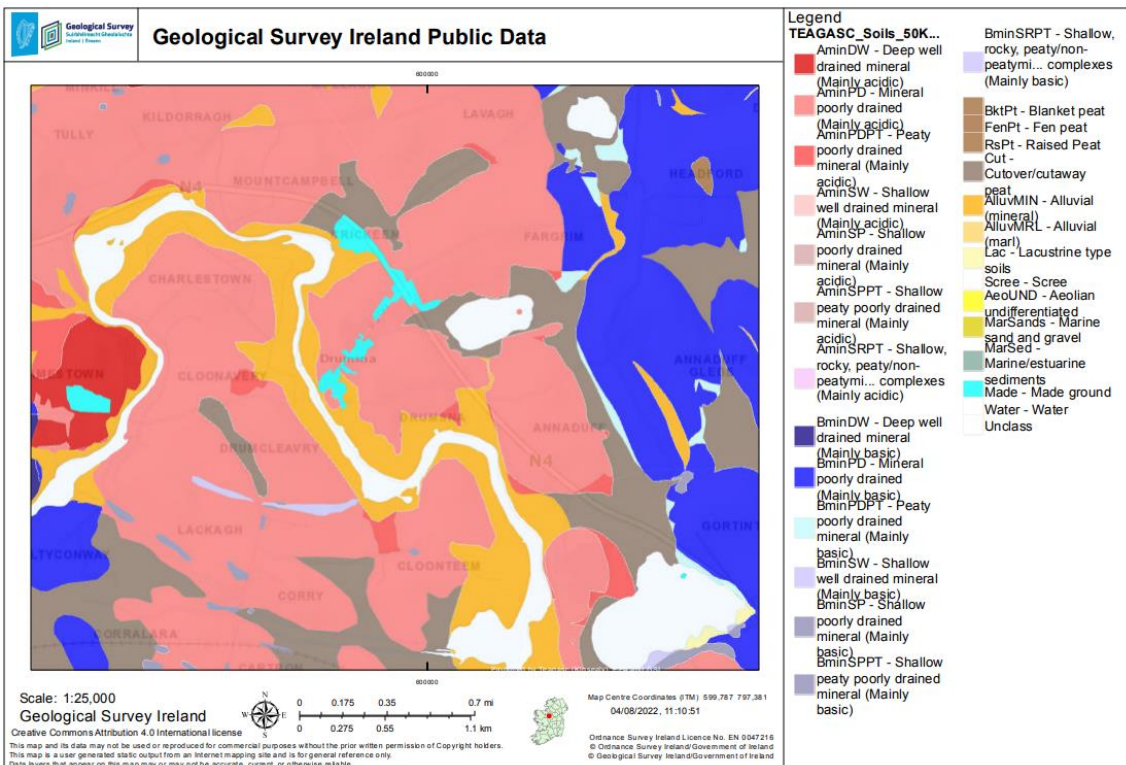
From the GSI Groundwater Aquifer Map this Site is classified as RKC - Regionally Important Aquifer - Karstified (conduit).

Figure 6 - Vulnerability Map



Groundwater data Viewer, GSI Vulnerability Map this site is classified as M - Moderate

Figure 7 - Teagasc soil Map



Geographical Survey Ireland (GSI) indicates soil permeability classification as Alluvium and Till derived chiefly from Devonian sandstones. TTs

2.4 Construction Methodology

The construction sequence will generally be as follows:

1. Site clearance;
2. Drainage works (including services);
3. Foundations;
4. Structural works; and,
5. Ground works, including surfacing and landscaping.

2.5 Drainage & Wastewater Management

Wastewater from the proposed development will be directed to the existing foul sewer line along the Main St for treatment in the Drumsna Wastewater Treatment plant.

Surface water from the site will be directed into the local storm water network.

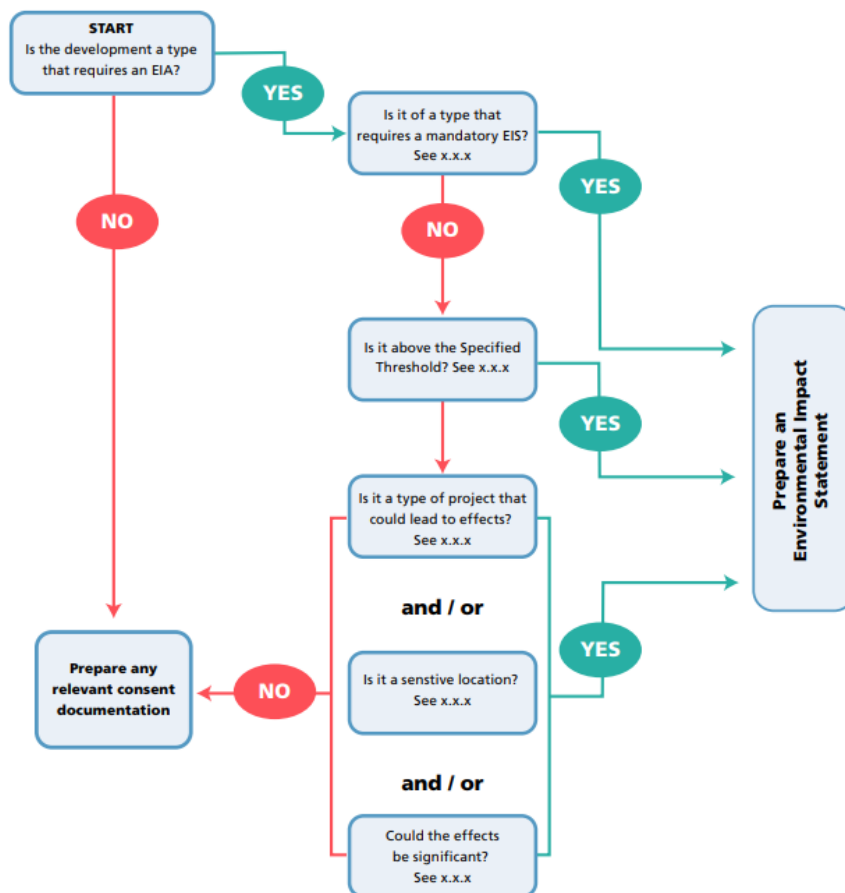
3.0 EIA SCREENING PROCESS

3.1 Introduction

This EIA Screening Report has been prepared by Traynor Environmental Ltd on behalf of Leitrim County Council, with the aim of documenting the significant environmental effects, positive and negative, which the proposed development is likely to have on the receiving environment. The reference documents used to inform the process are summarised in Section 2.2 Methodology.

The Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects, Guidance on Screening (European Commission, 2017) provides a flow diagram of the Steps in Screening and this is the process generally followed in this Screening Report (See Figure 8).

Figure 8 - Flow Diagram of the Steps in Screening (Source: European Commission Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects, Guidance on Screening, 2017)



3.2 Legislation

The screening process followed in this report is in accordance with the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council as amended by 2014/52/EU and as transposed by the Act and the Regulations and follows the format as per Section 3.2 of the EPA Guidelines (2022). The potential for significant effects of the proposed Project has been considered against the criteria under Annex II A of the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU and Schedule 7 of the *Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 as amended*.

The legislation and guidance listed below has informed this report and the method to EIA Screening:

- Environmental Impact Assessment Screening, OPR Practice Note PN02 (Office of the Planning Regulator, 2021).
- European Union (Planning & Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018.
- Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects – Guidance on Screening. (2017). European Commission.
- Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects - Guidance on the preparation of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report. (2017) European Commission.

- Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment. (August 2018). Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.
- Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports. (2022). Environment Protection Agency.
- Advice Notes for preparing Environmental Impact Statements. (Draft, September 2015). Environment Protection Agency.
- European Union Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU.
- Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).
- Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016
- Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

The screening process followed in this report is in accordance with the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council as amended by 2014/52/EU and as transposed by the Act and the Regulations and follows the format as per Section 3.2 of the EPA Guidelines (2022). The potential for significant effects of the proposed Project has been considered against the criteria under Annex II A of the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU and Schedule 7 of the *Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 as amended*.

It is important for Leitrim County Council to note that Article 27 of the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU states that "The screening procedure should ensure that an environmental impact assessment is only required for projects likely to have significant effects on the environment". This screening exercise is used to establish whether the proposed project is likely to have significant effects on the environment and if an EIA Report is required. As required by Article 299B(1)(b)(ii)(III)(C), the available results of other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment carried out pursuant to European Union legislation other than the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive have been considered within this EIA Screening Report.

In addition to the information included in this report relevant to Article 299C(1)(v), an AA Screening report has been prepared in relation to the likely significant effects on European sites.

Preliminary Screening for EIA

The Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) provide for preliminary screening for EIA. The Departmental Guidelines (August 2018) state as follows in relation to such a preliminary screening:

"For all sub-threshold developments listed in Schedule 5 Part 2, where no EIAR is submitted or EIA determination requested, a screening determination is required to be undertaken by the competent authority unless, on preliminary examination it can be concluded that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment. This is initiated by the competent authority following the receipt of a planning application or appeal.

A preliminary examination is undertaken, based on professional expertise and experience, and having regard to the 'Source – Pathway – Target' model, where appropriate. The examination should have regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7 to the 2001 Regulations."

It is our view that it is appropriate to carry out a screening of the development for EIA.

3.3 Mandatory EIA

As per Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, the proposed development does not meet the thresholds to require a mandatory EIA.

3.4 Sub-Threshold Development

Where a decision is being made on whether a proposed development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment, regard must be given to the following project characteristics outlined in Annex III of the EIA Directive 2014/52/EU:

- (a) The size and design of the whole project;
- (b) Cumulation with other existing and/or approved projects;
- (c) The use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;
- (d) The production of waste;
- (e) Pollution and nuisances;
- (f) 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;
- (g) The risks to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution).

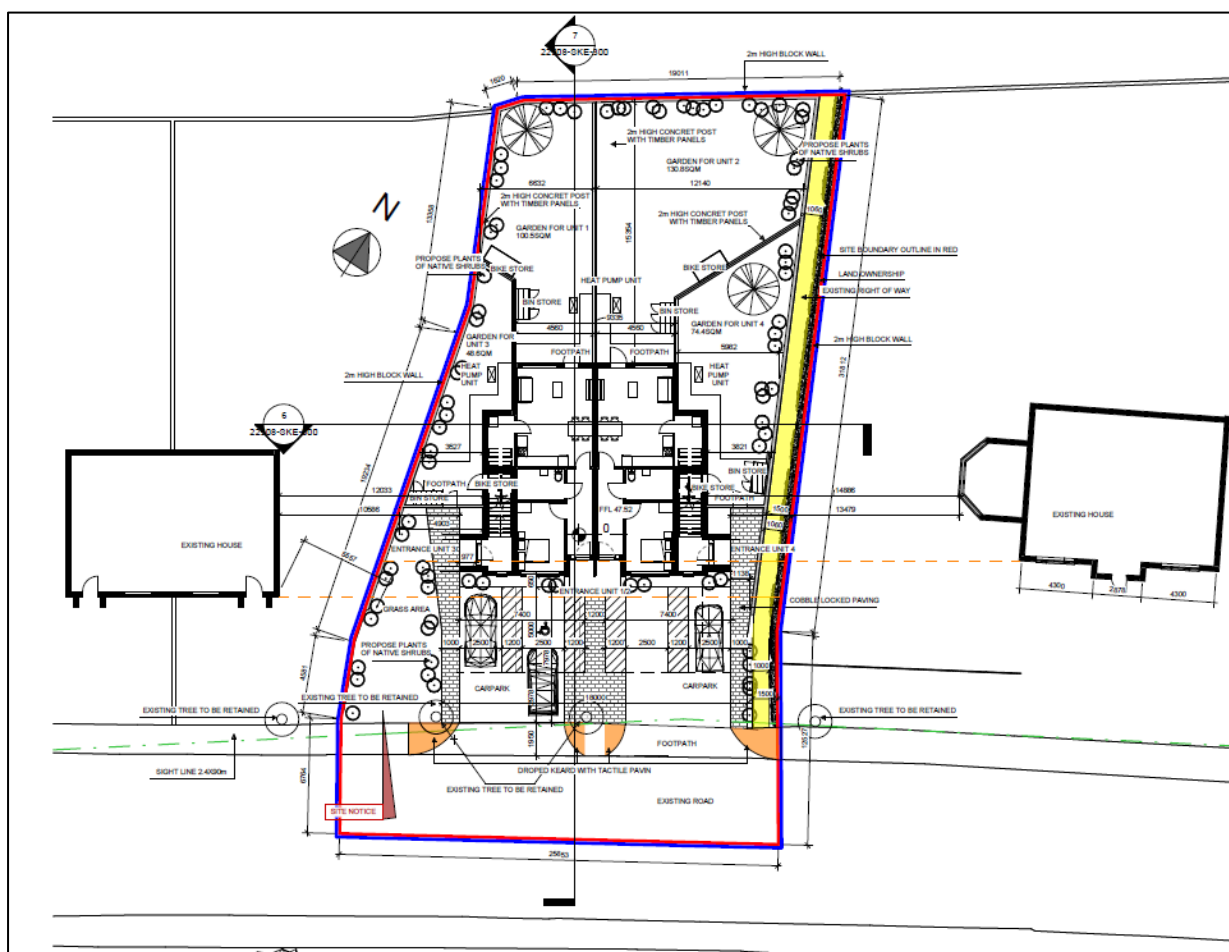
Additionally, the screening process can be aided using the checklists contained within the European Commission publication Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects, Guidance on Screening (2017). Table 1. the criteria are taken from Annex III of the Directive, Section 2.

3.5 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

3.5.1 Size of the Development

The application site is a greenfield site of 0.1ha and it located in the village of Drumsna. Access to site will be via the creation of an entrance that is just off Main St. The site is bounded to the south-east by Main St, to the north-east and south-west by separate residential sites and to the north-west by agricultural lands.

Figure9 – Detail Site Layout



3.5.2 Cumulation with Other Projects

Information on the site and the area of the proposed development was studied prior to the completion of this statement. The following data sources were accessed in order to complete a thorough examination of all impacts:

- National Parks and Wildlife Service - aerial photographs and maps of designated sites, information on habitats and species within these sites and information on protected plant or animal species; conservation objectives, site synopses and standard data forms for relevant designated sites;
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)- Information pertaining to water quality, and geology
- Myplan.ie – Mapped based information
- National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) – Information pertaining to protected plant and animal species within the study area
- Sweeney Architects (Plans and information pertaining to the development

- Leitrim County Council (eplan website)– Information on planning history in the area in order to ascertain potential cumulative impacts
- An Bord Pleanála website (planning searches)
- Web search for major infrastructure projects in the Leitrim Area
- 2015-2021 Leitrim County Development

The cumulative impact of the development in combination with existing baseline actions is not significantly worse than any of the individual impacts associated with the construction and operation of the proposed development.

The National Planning Application Map was consulted for the previous 5 years to identify notable applications (proposed development), or applications granted permission (permitted development) within that period within 500m of the development site. The National Planning Application Map includes planning application data sourced from the 31 individual local authorities across Ireland. This list of consented development is shown in Appendix A at the end of this report. The review of the online planning tool noted a large number of changes of use, retention and other minor alterations in the vicinity of the proposed development. These proposed and consented development have been, where relevant, considered as a part of the overall project impact.

3.5.3 Use of Natural Resources (Land, Soil, Water, Biodiversity.)

This section describes the proposed development in terms of the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water, biodiversity. The main use of natural resources will be land. It is noted that the subject lands are greenfield lands along the main street of Drumsna.

Other resources used will be construction materials which will be typical raw materials used in construction of new buildings. The scale and quantity of the materials used will not be such that would cause concern in relation to significant effects on the environment.

Land and Soil

It is considered that the proposed development will enhance the landscape in the area, replacing a greenfield site (with derelict buildings) of 0.1 ha with a mixed-use scheme which incorporates high quality hard and soft landscaping. The site, in terms of area is not considered significant in the context of Ireland's available land area. The high quality hard and soft landscaping proposals detailed within the application will enhance the existing site.

The proposed development will require the excavation and removal of soils and materials for the purposes of excavation for foundations, landscaping, access and services. Site investigations and environmental soil testing will be undertaken, prior to the removal of any excavated material from the proposed development site.

All waste soils prior to being exported off-site, shall be classified as inert, non-hazardous or hazardous in accordance with the EPA's Waste Classification Guidance – List of Waste & Determining if Waste is Hazardous or Non-Hazardous document dated 1st June 2015 to ensure that the waste material is transferred by an appropriately permitted waste collection permit holder and brought to an appropriately permitted or licensed waste facility. Materials that can be reused will be notified to the EPA as a by-product. This ensures that waste and other materials removed from the site will have no significant effect on the environment.

There will be a requirement for deliveries of imported engineering fill, and other construction materials. Other construction activities will include site storage of cement and concrete materials, and plant.

Water Consumption

The construction or operation of the scheme will not use such a quantity of water to cause concern in relation to significant effects on the environment.

During construction of the scheme, water will be required for welfare facilities, this will be provided by either tanker or temporary connection to the public main by agreement between the Main Contractor and Irish Water. The construction phase will not use such a quantity of water to cause concern in relation to significant effects on the environment.

Once the development is completed and the development is occupied there will be a water primary demand domestic consumption for usage for showers, toilets and cooking. The existing water infrastructure within the area has been confirmed with Irish Water to have adequate capacity to cater for the proposed development at the date of response. There is no proposed extraction of groundwater at the site.

Biodiversity

Investigations into the implications on existing biodiversity including species and habitats has been undertaken through the Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report and Invasive Species Report prepared by Noreen McLoughlin of Whitehill Environmental and included with the planning documentation.

The accompanying AA Screening Report has accessed the potential for significant impacts of the construction and operational phases of the proposed development on Natura 2000 sites and habitat loss/alteration, habitat/species fragmentation, disturbance and/or displacement of species, change in population density and changes in water quality.

This screening has accessed the potential for significant impacts of the construction and operational phases of the proposed development on Natura 2000 sites and habitat loss/alteration, habitat/species fragmentation, disturbance and/or displacement of species, change in population density and changes in water quality.

All Natura 2000 designated sites within 15km of the proposed works were considered during the screening process for the potential of the proposed development to have significant effects upon their

qualifying interests or conservation objectives. The proposed development is not considered likely to give rise to any significant impacts on any Natura 2000 designated sites.

The site habitats have been defined using Fossitt's 'A Guide to Habitats in Ireland'. The application site does not lie within or adjacent to any area that has been designated for nature conservation purposes. The site is greenfield, lying between two residential sites. The dominant habitat in the site is an unmanaged grassland habitat. It is akin to the Fossitt habitat Dry Meadows and Grassy Verges (GS2). Grasses such as meadow grass *Poa* sp. and cocksfoot grass *Dactylis glomerata* were dominant here, whilst the broadleaved component was dominated by species including dandelion *Taraxacum* sp, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens* and broadleaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius*. There is also bramble scrub on the site, along with some scattered immature willows *Salix* sp.

Overall, it is considered that there are no habitats of biodiversity value within the application site itself.

An examination of the website of the National Biodiversity Data Centre revealed that there are modern records (post 1990) for the presence of one protected mammal species from within the relevant 1km square (M9997) of this proposed development site. This species is Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii* and it is fully protected under the Irish Wildlife Acts. The application site does not contain any suitable roosting habitat for bats, although bats might fly over the site to forage at night time.

No 'High Impact' invasive species listed in the Third Schedule of European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI 477 of 2011, as amended) e.g. Japanese Knotweed, were recorded at the site during the survey conducted by Noreen Mc Loughlin. However, precautions should be undertaken during all stages of site preparation, construction and landscaping. This is especially important given the fact that knotweed is generally common in certain areas in Co. Leitrim and the potential for the transfer of vector material from one construction site to another remains a genuine risk.

3.5.4 Production of Waste

Construction Phase

During the construction phase there may be a surplus of building materials, such as timber off-cuts, broken concrete blocks, plastics, metals and tiles generated. There may also be excess concrete during construction which will need to be disposed of. Plastic and cardboard waste from packaging and oversupply of materials will also be generated. The construction contractor will be required to ensure that oversupply of materials is kept to a minimum and opportunities for reuse of suitable materials is maximised.

Waste will also be generated from construction workers e.g. organic/food waste, dry mixed recyclables (waste paper, newspaper, plastic bottles, packaging, aluminium cans, tins and Tetra Pak cartons), mixed non-recyclables and potentially sewage sludge from temporary welfare facilities provided onsite during the construction phase. Waste printer/toner cartridges, waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) and waste batteries may also be generated infrequently from site offices.

If excavated material is removed off-site it could be reused as a by-product (and not as a waste). If this is done, it will be done in accordance with Article 27 of the European Communities (Waste Directive) Regulations 2011, which requires that certain conditions are met and that by-product notifications are made to the EPA via their online notification form. Excavated material should not be removed from site until approval from the EPA has been received. The potential to reuse material as a by-product will be confirmed during the course of the excavation works, with the objective of eliminating any unnecessary disposal of material.

If any soils/stones are imported onto the site from another construction site as a by product, this will also be done in accordance with Article 27. Article 27 will be investigated to see if the material can be imported onto this site for beneficial reuse instead of using virgin materials.

It should be noted that until final materials and detailed construction methodologies have been confirmed it is difficult to predict with a high level of accuracy the construction waste that will be generated from the construction of the proposed development as the exact materials and quantities may be subject to some degree of change and variation during the construction process.

Operational Phase

The proposed development will give rise to a variety of waste streams during the operational phase, i.e. when the project is completed, and fully operational. The majority of waste will be generated by the occupants. These waste types will mainly be non-hazardous.

The following measures will be implemented:

- On-site segregation of all waste materials into appropriate categories including (but not limited to):
 - Dry Mixed Recyclables;
 - Organic food/green waste;
 - Mixed Non-Recyclable Waste;
 - Batteries (non-hazardous and hazardous);
 - Waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) including computers, printers and other ICT equipment;
 - Timber Pallets;
 - Metal shelving (and from time-to-time other bulky wastes); and
 - Cleaning chemicals (solvents, pesticides, paints, adhesives, resins, detergents, etc.).

- All waste materials will be stored in colour coded bins or other suitable receptacles in designated, easily accessible locations. Bins will be clearly labelled with the approved waste type to ensure there is no cross contamination of waste materials;
- All waste collected from the development will be reused, recycled or recovered where possible, with the exception of those waste streams where appropriate facilities are currently not available;
- All waste leaving the site will be transported by suitable permitted contractors and taken to suitably registered, permitted or licensed facilities; and
- All waste leaving the site will be recorded and copies of relevant documentation maintained.

All waste contractors collecting waste from the site must hold a valid collection permit to transport waste must be held by each waste contractor which is issued by the National Waste Collection Permit Office (NWCPO) and waste will only be brought to suitably registered/permited/licenced facilities. It is essential that all waste materials are dealt with in accordance with regional and national legislation, as outlined previously, and that time and resources are dedicated to ensuring efficient waste management practices.

These measures will ensure the waste arising from the development is dealt with in compliance with the provisions of the Waste Management Act 1996, as amended, associated Regulations, the Litter Pollution Act 1997 and the EMR Waste Management Plan 2015 – 2021 (and any succeeding guidance). It will also ensure optimum levels of waste reduction, reuse, recycling and recovery are achieved.

3.5.5 Pollution and Nuisances

There are potential short-term nuisances such as dust, noise, as well as the potential for pollution of groundwater associated with demolition, excavations and construction. During the operation of the proposed development the buildings will be managed effectively in accordance with planning conditions to avoid nuisance.

3.5.6 Risk of Major Accidents and/or Disasters

The risk of accidents associated with this development would not cause unusual, significant or adverse effects of a type that would, in themselves, require an EIA. During the construction stage, the likelihood of an accidental spillage of construction materials into the aquatic environment will be managed through the adoption of strict best practice construction management.

It is anticipated that any localised drainage issues would be engineered out as required during construction. It is concluded that the proposed development is located in an area which is not liable to flooding and will not in and of itself result in any additional flood risk.

The proposed development is not within the consultation distance of any Seveso site, nor is the proposed development a Seveso/COMAH facility.

3.5.7 Risk to Human Health

The characteristics of the proposed development, in terms of the risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution) have been considered. The primary potential impacts of the proposed development on human health would be potential for increased air pollution, noise, traffic, or pollution of groundwater/watercourses as a result of the proposed development during the construction phase. Once the development is operational, there is also a potential visual impact but potentially of lesser significance (based on the location and the nature of the proposed development).

There will be no significant negative impact on local parks. It is not anticipated that the proposed development will have a significant negative impact on local tourism or shopping amenities.

Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) data indicates that the site does not lie within a drinking water protection area. The area is serviced by mains water supply therefore it is unlikely that any wells are used for potable water supply. The proposed mitigation measures during the construction phase will ensure that there are no impacts on groundwater or the stormwater mains.

The proposed development will include an appropriately designed stormwater network that will ensure that during the operational phase the risk from diesel spills through the carparks or unloading areas is minimised. Wastewater from the proposed development will connect to mains supplies and will not have a potential impact on local amenities or the local population.

3.6 Location and Context of the proposed Project

The second criterion included in Annex III of the EIA Directive relates to the geographical location of projects, having regard in particular to:

- (a) The existing and approved land use
- (b) The relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground;
- (c) The absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:
 - (i) Wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;
 - (ii) Coastal zones and the marine environment;
 - (iii) Mountain and forest areas;
 - (iv) Nature reserves and parks;
 - (v) Areas classified or protected under national legislation; Natura 2000 areas designated by Member States pursuant to the Habitats Directive;
 - (vi) 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;
 - (vii) Densely populated areas;
 - (viii) Landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.

3.6.1 Existing and Approved Land Use

The land use surrounding the site is predominantly semi urban. The dominant habitat in the site is an unmanaged grassland habitat. It is akin to the Fossit habitat Dry Meadows and Grassy Verges (GS2). Grasses such as meadow grass *Poa* sp. and cocksfoot grass *Dactylis glomerata* were dominant here, whilst the broadleaved component was dominated by species including dandelion *Taraxacum* sp, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens* and broadleaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius*. There is also bramble scrub on the site, along with some scattered immature willows *Salix* sp.

3.6.2 Relative Abundance, Availability, Quality and Regenerative Capacity of Natural Resources

The proposed development will have minimum impact on the quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area. The area proposed for the development is the improvement of lands for residential use and will have **no impacts** upon the integrity or the structure of the designated site identified.

3.6.3 The Absorption Capacity of the Natural Environment

3.6.3.1 Overview

The application site is approximately 0.1 ha. The application site is a greenfield site of 0.1 ha and it located in the village of Drumsna. Access to site will be via the creation of an entrance that is just off Main St. The site is bounded to the south-east by Main St, to the north-east and south-west by separate residential sites and to the north-west by agricultural lands.

Biodiversity and Areas of Conservation

The potential ecological impacts of proposed development have been considered in terms of the sensitivity of the location through the Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report prepared by Noreen McLoughlin of Whitehill Environmental Ltd.included with the planning documentation.

Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2009) Guidance on Appropriate Assessment recommends an assessment of European sites within a Zone of Impact (Zoi) of 15km. The AA Screening identified one Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) within a 15km zone of influence of the proposed development. These sites are outlined in the Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Natura 2000 Sites Within 15km of the Proposed Site

Site Name & Code	Distance	Qualifying Interests	Potential Effects?
Clooneen Bog SAC 002348	14.2km south-east	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active raised bogs Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion Bog woodland 	<i>Having regards to the separation distance and the lack of ecological and hydrological connectivity between the application site and this SAC, significant effects can be ruled out.</i>

The AA Screening Report concludes that *'It is of the opinion of the author that an AA of the proposed development is not required as significant effects upon all designated sites identified within 15km can be ruled out.*

The Invasive Species Report and AA provide mitigation and enhancements measures for the proposed development, which when implemented, will result in no significant negative ecological impact as a result of the construction or development phases of the proposed development.

3.6.3.2 Mountains and Forest Areas

There are no mountains areas within the study area of the proposed development. An area of Forestry is located 300m northwest of the site boundary.

3.6.3.3 Nature Reserves and Parks

There are no nature reserves or parks affected by the proposed development.

3.6.3.4 Nationally Designated Sites & European Sites

The proposed development lies outside the boundaries of the Natura 2000 sites identified in Section 4.6.3. There will be no reduction of designated habitat area. There will be no interference with the boundaries of any designated site.

3.6.3.5 Environmental Quality Standards

There are no known areas in which the environmental quality standards shall be exceeded.

3.6.3.6 Densely Populated Areas

The development is not expected to affect any densely populated areas. Given the size and scale of the development there is not likely to be any significant impact on road users as a result of the proposed development. The additional increase in traffic as a result of the development will be minimal.

3.6.3.7 Landscapes and Sites of Historical, Cultural or Archaeological Significance

There are no known architectural or archaeological sites or structures within the site area or in the immediate environs of the site. An architectural or archaeological site is located 100m across the road to the southwest of the site. Burial ground - The rath (LE031-085001-) contains the ruins of a Presbyterian Meeting House.

3.6.3.8 Designated Focal Points/Views

There will be no views, prospects or scenic routes affected by the proposed development.

3.6.3.9 Summary

The proposed development due to its size and localised nature will not have any significant negative effect on wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths, coastal zones and the marine environment, mountain and forest areas, nature reserves and parks, or densely populated areas.

EPA maps (<https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/default>) confirm that the development site is not located within or adjoining an Architectural or General Conservation Area; is not located within or adjoining a Native Woodland Trust; and is not covered by protected views, scenic routes or viewpoints. The environmental

sensitivity of the proposed location in respect of Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive has been addressed.

3.7 Types and Characteristics of the Potential Impacts

3.7.1 Population and Human Health

3.7.1.1 Construction Phase

The potential impacts of the proposed development on human health and populations during the construction and demolition phases would be nuisances such as increased air pollution (dust), noise, traffic and visual impact. The likely potential impact of the proposed development with respect to population and human health during the construction phase can be considered to be negative, not significant and short-term.

These potential short-term impacts during the construction will be mitigated through best practice and through implementation of binding hours of construction.

There is no significant risk of pollution of soil, groundwater or watercourses associated with the proposed development.

The construction phase of the proposed development will provide for the temporary employment of construction workers which will provide benefits for local businesses providing retail or other services to construction workers and potential additional employment in the area.

Standards in relation to construction noise, traffic, and dust generation that must be met during the construction stage and any subsequent planning conditions relevant to the proposed development will be adhered to.

The potential impact of the proposed development with respect to populations human health during the construction phase is negative, not significant and short-term.

3.7.1.2 Operational Phase

Upon completion, the operational phase will provide an important material asset for the area in terms of high-quality accommodation. The proposed development will not result in any off-site exceedance of the relevant ambient air quality standards. The proposed development is not a noise sensitive use, see Noise Section for further detail.

There are no planned direct discharges to water or land, although the risk of accidental discharge or spills exists. A number of design measures will be adopted to prevent the contamination of groundwater during the operational phase. The design of the proposed development has due regard of the sensitivity of the surroundings. Landscape and Visual impacts are discussed further in Landscape & Visual section. The potential impact of the proposed development with respect to populations and human health during the operational phase is positive, not significant and long-term.

3.7.2 Land, Soils, Geology, Hydrogeology, hydrology

3.7.2.1 Construction Phase

Potential for increased sediment and runoff from excavation, soil handling, removal and compaction.

Land clearing, earthworks and excavations will be required for construction phase operations to facilitate site clearance, construction of new elements, foundations, car park area and installation of services. This will include site levelling, construction, and building foundation excavation, this will necessitate the removal of vegetation cover and the excavation of soil and subsoils.

The construction works will alter the current drainage regime from the greenfield site and the rate and volume of direct surface run-off. The potential impact of this is a possible increase in surface water run-off and sediment loading, which could potentially impact local drainage if not adequately mitigated.

Surface water from the site will be directed into the local storm water network.

Movement of material will be minimised to reduce the degradation of soil structure and generation of dust. Excavations will remain open for as little time as possible before the placement of fill. This will help to minimise the potential for water ingress into excavations. Soil from works will be stored away from existing drainage features to avoid any potential impact.

The site preparation, excavations and levelling works required to facilitate construction of foundations, and the installation of services/ car park will require excavation of soil, stones, and bedrock (if encountered). Any material, which is exported from site, if not correctly managed or handled, could impact negatively on human beings (onsite and offsite) as well as water and soil environments.

Prior to removal, all excavated materials will be visually assessed for signs of possible contamination such as staining or strong odours. Should any unusual staining or odour be noticed, samples of this soil will be analysed for the presence of possible contaminants in order to ensure that historical pollution of the soil has not occurred. Should it be determined that any of the soil excavated is contaminated, this will be disposed of by a licensed waste disposal contractor.

Excavated soil will arise during the construction period and will be stored (if required) on site prior to being removed by a specialist contractor.

Stockpiles of soil and construction aggregate can have the potential to cause negative impacts on air and water quality. The effects of soil stripping and stockpiling will be mitigated against through the implementation of appropriate earthworks handling protocol during construction. It is anticipated that any stockpiles will be formed within the boundary of the site and there will be no direct link or pathway from this area to any surface water body. Overburden material will be protected from exposure to wind by storing the material in sheltered parts of the site, where possible.

In respect of the foregoing, the residual impact as a result of the potential for increased sediment and runoff from excavation works on, land, soils, geology, hydrogeology, and hydrology during operation is considered to be negative, imperceptible and short-term.

Potential for Contamination from Accidental Spills and Leaks

There is potential for water (rainfall and/or discontinuous perched groundwater) to become contaminated with pollutants associated with construction activity. Contaminated water which arises from construction sites can pose a significant short-term risk to water quality for the duration of the

construction if contaminated water is allowed percolate to the aquifer or accidental discharges into surface water.

Machinery activities on site during the construction phase may result in contamination of runoff into surface water. Potential impacts could arise from accidental spillage of fuels, oils, paints, cement, etc. which could impact surface water if allowed to runoff into surface water systems and/or receiving watercourses.

The potential impacts during the construction phase are required to be mitigated by ensuring best practice construction with respect to storage of any hazardous substances (fuels, chemicals and other construction materials that may pose a risk to the environment).

Best practice construction methodology will be followed to manage the risk of accidental spills and leaks. These measures associated with the construction phase are best practice measures, and are in no way included to avoid or reduce any potential harmful effects to any European sites.

Given scale and localised nature of the proposed development, and the lack of impact pathways between the Site and surface water bodies here is no likelihood of significant effects on water quality.

In respect of the foregoing, the residual impact in respect of the potential for impacts related to contamination from accidental spills on, soils, geology, hydrogeology, and hydrology during operation is considered to be negative, imperceptible and short-term.

Dewatering, Run-off and Sediment Loading

There is the potential for surface water run-off from site preparation and excavations during the construction phase may contain increased silt levels or become polluted from construction activities. Run-off containing large amounts of silt can cause damage to surface water systems and receiving watercourses. Silt water can arise from excavations, exposed ground, stockpiles, and access roads.

Construction water containing large amounts of silt or other contaminants such as hydrocarbons has the potential to cause negative, and short-term impacts receiving surface water bodies, or surface water networks, if not adequately mitigated.

The Contractor appointed to undertake the works will be required to develop this framework document as part of their overall Construction Management Plan in line with their obligations under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013 as amended.

Measures should be put in place to help ensure that the receiving surface water drainage network is sufficiently protected for the duration of the proposed works. It is noted that these are standard construction best-practise procedures and are in no way included as mitigation to protect any European Sites.

In respect of the foregoing, the residual impact in respect of the potential for impacts related to dewatering on, soils, geology, hydrogeology, and hydrology during operation is considered to be negative, imperceptible and short-term.

Foul Water During Construction

Welfare facilities will be provided for the contractors on site during the construction works. During construction, portable sanitary facilities will be provided with waste collected and disposed of appropriately. There are no predicted adverse impacts on wastewater during construction.

With due consideration to the characteristics of the proposed development and the site location, there are no likely potential significant negative impacts of the proposed development in relation to foul water during construction, under the environmental factor of land, soils, geology, hydrogeology, and hydrology.

3.7.2.2 Operational Phase

Direct and Indirect Discharges Management

Surface water from the site will be directed into the local storm water network.

The proposed site drainage incorporates SuDS elements and flows will be restricted. SuDS elements will include the use of permeable paving, tree pits or landscaped areas to interception treatment for storm water run-off, and attenuation.

The residual impact on land, soils, geology, hydrogeology, and hydrology during operation is considered to be neutral, imperceptible and long term.

Accidental Spill and Leaks

Any accidental fuel emissions during storage, transfer, or delivery or leakage in the car parks could cause localised contamination if the emissions enter the soil and groundwater environment without adequate mitigation. However, it is noted that any accidental discharge will more likely impact stormwater drainage due to the hardstand and drainage infrastructure proposed.

Flood Risk

The risk of the site contributing to offsite flooding or the sites vulnerability to flooding from the public drainage network is mitigated by the installation of SuDS measures.

The predicted impact on land, soils, geology, hydrogeology, and hydrology during operation is considered to be neutral, imperceptible and long term.

3.7.3 Biodiversity

3.7.3.1 Construction Phase

The potential impact from the proposed development on biodiversity with particular attention to species and habitats protected under the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive has been considered as a part of the AA Screening Report provided with the planning documentation. The AA Screening Report for the site has confirmed that the site is not under any wildlife or conservation designation. Furthermore, no rare, threatened or legally protected species are known to occur on the site.

There is the potential for deterioration in water quality as a result of elevated suspended solids or from chemical pollution which would have the potential to significantly impact on downstream habitats and ultimately species. However, this will be avoided by the inclusion of SuDS design features incorporated as part of the surface water drainage design.

On the basis of the above with regard to the evidence set out within the AA Screening Report the potential effects on local biodiversity and ecology are **neutral, imperceptible**, and **short term** for the construction phase.

3.7.3.2 Operational Phase

The accompanying AA Screening Report and Invasive Species report prepared by Noreen Mc Loughlin of Whitehill Environmental Ltd. have assessed the potential for significant impacts of the operational phase of the proposed development on Natura 2000 sites and habitat loss/alteration, disturbance and/or displacement of species and changes in water quality.

The development during operation is considered to enhance the biodiversity in the area due to the introduction of a high quality landscaping and planting scheme which will create habitats. In this regard, biodiversity is not likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development.

The following mitigation measures will be incorporated and adhered to during the construction and operational phases of the proposed development to ensure that the works do not result in contravention of wildlife legislation:

1. All activities will comply with all relevant legislation and best practice to reduce any potential environmental impacts;
2. The Site manager shall ensure that all personnel working on-site are adequately trained; and,
3. If protected or notable species are encountered during operations at the Site the ECoW or NPWS will be contacted for advice.
4. Only vegetation which must be removed to facilitate the development will be removed.

In accordance with the guidelines issued by the Department of the Environment and Local Government, a list of Natura 2000 sites within 15km of the proposed development have been identified and described according to their site synopsis, qualifying interests and conservation objectives. In addition, any other sites further than this, but potentially within its zone of interest were also considered. The zone of impact may be determined by an assessment of the connectivity between the application site and the designated areas by virtue of hydrological connectivity, atmospheric emissions, flight paths, ecological corridors etc.

There is one Natura 2000 sites within 15km of the application site. These designated areas and their closest points to the application site are summarised in Table 1 and a map showing their locations relative to the application site is shown in Figure 9. A full description of all these sites can be read on the website of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (npws.ie).

The generic conservation objectives of these sites are:

1. To maintain the favourable conservation status of the qualifying interests (outlined above) of these SACs & SPAs.
2. To maintain the extent, species richness and biodiversity of the entire site.
3. To establish effective liaison and co-operation with landowners, legal users and relevant authorities.

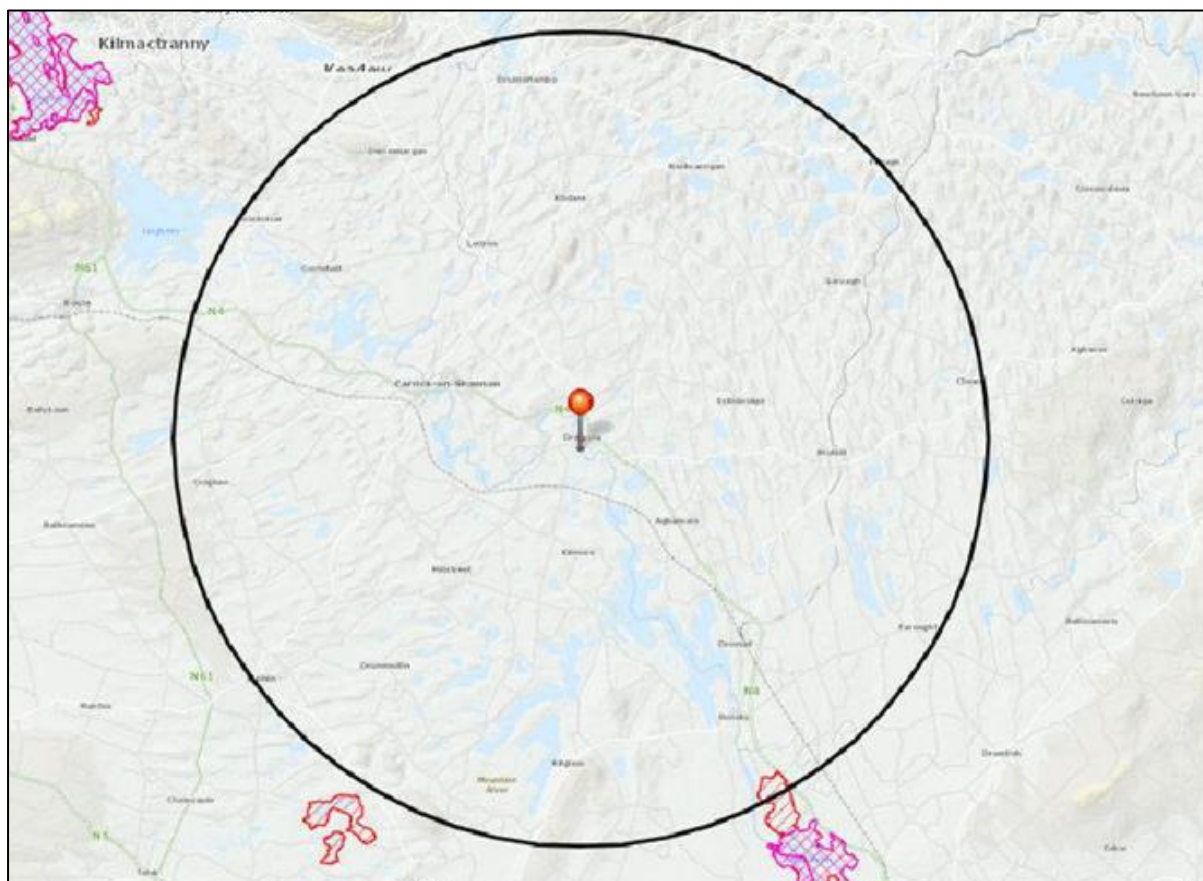
The favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

- Its natural range and area it covers within that range is stable or increasing and the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future;
- The conservation status of its typical species is favourable.

The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when:

- The population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats;
- The natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future;
- There is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

Figure 9 – The Application Site in relation to the Natura 2000 Sites within 15km



On the basis of the above with regard to the evidence set out above, the potential effects on local biodiversity and ecology are positive, slight, and long term for the operational phase.

3.7.4 Air Quality and Climate

3.7.4.1 Construction Phase

Construction stage traffic and embodied energy of construction materials are expected to be the dominant source of greenhouse gas emissions as a result of the construction phase of the development. Construction vehicles, generators etc., may give rise to some CO₂ and N₂O emissions. However, due to short-term nature of these works, the impact on climate will be not significant, and short term.

Nevertheless, some site-specific mitigation measures will be implemented during the construction phase of the proposed development to ensure emissions are reduced further. In particular the prevention of on-site or delivery vehicles from leaving engines idling, even over short periods. Minimising waste of materials due to poor timing or over ordering on site will aid to minimise the embodied carbon footprint of the site.

The greatest potential impact on air quality during the construction phase of the proposed development is from construction dust emissions and the potential for nuisance dust and PM₁₀/PM_{2.5} emissions. While construction dust tends to be deposited within 350 m of a construction site, the majority of the deposition occurs within the first 50 m based on Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) guidance (2011).

The key sensitive receptor of local residents are located approximately along the site boundary to the northeast and southwest respectively from the proposed development. It is unlikely to be any negative impacts a result of dust soiling due to the separation distance from residents. In the absence of mitigation the impact would be considered neutral, imperceptible and short-term.

Nuisance dust arising from site clearance and construction activities will be prevented where possible and managed in accordance with best practice and any subsequent planning conditions relevant to the proposed development.

There is low potential for fugitive dust generation during construction due to the low sensitivity of the receiving environment and scale of the proposed works. The predicted impact of the construction works on air quality as a result of dust emissions will therefore be short-term and imperceptible.

On the basis of the above, the potential effects on Air Quality and Climate are negative, imperceptible, and short term for the construction phase.

3.7.4.2 Operational Phase

In relation to the operational phase of the proposed development, the proposed development will not result in any significant emissions of air quality pollutants or greenhouse gases once operational. Therefore, the impact to air quality from the operational phase of the proposed Project is expected to be insignificant. Therefore, the predicted impact of the proposed project on ambient air quality is deemed to be long-term and imperceptible.

Current EPA guidance states that a development may have an influence on global climate where it represents "a significant proportion of the national contribution to greenhouse gases" (EPA, 2003). The "Guidelines On The Information To Be Contained In Environmental Impact Assessment Reports" (EPA, 2022) states that impacts relevant to adaptation to climate change should be assessed and that projects should be assessed in terms of their vulnerability to climate change. Therefore, the impact to climate from the operational phase of the proposed Project is expected to be imperceptible in terms of national CO₂ emissions and Ireland's agreed limit under the Kyoto Protocol (Framework Convention on Climate Change, 1997, 1999) and the EU Effort Sharing Agreement ("20-20-20" Targets). The proposed Project will not result in any impacts relevant to adaptation therefore the project will not be vulnerable to climate change.

On the basis of the above the potential effects on Air Quality are neutral, imperceptible, and long term for the operational phase.

3.7.5 Noise and Vibration

3.7.5.1 Construction Phase

During the construction phase it is expected that there will be some temporary impact on the nearest residential properties due to noise emissions from the plant equipment required for construction. Furthermore, the application of binding hours of construction, along with implementation of appropriate noise and vibration control measures, will ensure that noise and vibration impact is kept to a minimum.

Minimisation measures to ensure nuisance noise arising from site clearance and construction activities will be prevented where possible and managed in accordance with best practice and any subsequent planning conditions relevant to the proposed development.

The relevant mitigation measures with respect to Noise and Vibration are as follows:

- All site staff shall be briefed on noise mitigation measure and of best practicable means to be employed to control noise.
- Site hoarding will be erected to maximise the reduction in noise levels.
- The Appointed Contractor will put in place a liaison officer to engage with neighbours on a weekly basis and keep them abreast of the pending works on site and address any concerns raised.
- Internal haul routes shall be maintained, and steep gradients shall be avoided where possible.
- Material and plant loading and unloading shall only take place during normal working hours unless the requirement for extended hours for traffic management (i.e. road closure) or health and safety reasons has been granted (application must be made to the Council a minimum of 4 days prior to proposed works).
- Appointed Contractor will ensure that each item of plant and equipment complies with the noise limits quoted in the relevant EC Directive 2000/14/EC.
- Shut down all plant and equipment in intermittent use in the intervening periods between work or throttle down to a minimum.
- Power plant by mains electricity where possible rather than generators.
- Employ partial or full enclosures for fixed plant where possible.
- Locate movable plant away from noise sensitive receptors where possible. On the basis of the potential effects on noise and vibration are negative, not significant, and short term for the construction phase.

3.7.5.2 Operational Phase

The operation of the proposed development will remain consistent with the type of activity and buildings in the vicinity of the proposed development site. The proposed development will be subject to compliance with any relevant noise criteria outlined in any relevant planning conditions.

The best practice method for measuring and assessing building services plant noise emissions is outlined in the British Standard BS4142:2014+A1:2019 Methods for Rating and Assessing Industrial and Commercial Sound. BS4142:2014+A1:2019 describes methods for rating and assessing sound of an industrial and/or commercial nature. The methods described in this British Standard use outdoor sound levels to assess the likely effects of sound on people who might be inside or outside a dwelling or premises used for residential purposes upon which sound is incident.

The potential effects on noise and vibration are neutral, imperceptible, and long term for the operational phase.

3.7.6 Landscape and Visual Impact

3.7.6.1 Construction Phase

The change of use of the site from its existing use to that of a construction site will give rise to short term and substantially localised effects on landscape character. The initial construction operations created by the clearance of the site and the construction of the buildings and plant will give rise to short-term impacts on the landscape character, through the introduction of new structures, machinery, ancillary works etc. There will also be a change to the landscape character as a result of a land-use change.

It is likely heavy plant and machinery will be visible from the site during construction. This will have a temporary slight negative impact. However, the overall landscape effect of the proposed development is considered to be positive, moderate and long term in nature.

The residual impact on landscape and visual impact during construction will be short term and will range from slight to moderate and neutral to negative.

3.7.6.2 Operational Phase

The proposed development is consistent with the land use zoning and the wider character of the area.

The visual impact of the proposed development on the surrounding area has been separately by Sweeney Architects. The application site comprises a greenfield site that contributes little to the character and visual quality of this part of Leitrim. The proposed development, while more substantial, would result in a positive contribution to the Landscape character and rural fabric of the wider area.

The use of high-quality materials and a planting scheme to provide a high-quality landscape environment.

Landscape and visual impacts during operation will be long term, slight to moderate and positive.

3.7.7 Cultural Heritage, and Archaeology

3.7.7.1 Construction Phase

A review of the Heritage Council's online database (<https://heritagemaps.ie/>) determined that there are no recorded archaeological sites or monuments within the proposed development lands. In addition, a review of the 2015-2021 Leitrim County Development confirms that there are no protected structures within the proposed development lands.

The construction phase of the development, due to its temporary nature, does not give rise to any impact on cultural heritage.

In this regard, any impacts on cultural heritage and archaeology are considered to be short-term, imperceptible and neutral.

3.7.7.2 Operational Phase

There will be no impacts on the archaeological heritage in the receiving environment during the operational phase of the proposed development.

3.7.8 Traffic and Transportation

3.7.8.1 Construction Phase

During the construction phase of the proposed development, there will be additional traffic movements to/from the site from construction personnel, security staff, professional staff (i.e. design team, utility companies), excavation plant, dumper trucks and deliveries/removal of materials (waste/spoil).

The potential effects on Traffic and Transportation are negative, not significant, and short term for the construction phase.

3.7.8.2 Operational Phase

The application site also has good connectivity to the local and strategic road network, with the N4 to the east and the R299 both located to the north.

The proposed development provides vehicular access from the Main street in Drumsna on the south eastern boundary of the site. This entrance will lead to both the surface level parking of the site. The proposed development includes the provision of carparking space and bike parking.

The proposed scheme is designed in compliance with the following:

- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2019);
- 2015-2021 Leitrim County Development ;
- National Cycle Manual (2011);
- Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (Guidelines for Planning Authorities) December 2020; and
- Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport Smarter Travel guidelines.

Further detail is presented in the Traffic and Transport Predictions included with the planning documentation.

On the basis of the above the potential effects on Traffic and Transportation are neutral, imperceptible, and long term for the operational phase.

3.7.9 Material Assets, and Waste

3.7.9.1 Construction Phase

Utilities: Foul Sewer, Stormwater and Potable Water

The proposed development will have an impact upon other material assets such as 'built services and infrastructure' (set out in the EPA Guidelines 2022) such as electricity, telecommunications, gas and water supply.

Welfare facilities (canteens, toilets etc.) will be available within the construction compound and this will remain in place for the construction of the proposed development. The offices and site amenities will initially need to have their own power supply (generator), water deliveries and foul water collection until connections are made to the mains networks.

Electrical connections will be made by suitably qualified personnel following consultation with the relevant authorities and will be cognisant of subsequent construction works. High voltage connections will be established for heavy duty equipment and site facilities, as required. All electrical works, including connection to the ESB network will be carried out by a suitably qualified contractor. The power and electrical supply requirements during construction are relatively minor, and there is no potential impact anticipated on existing users.

Water supply required for welfare facilities, dust suppression and general construction activities will be sourced from the existing public piped supply running adjacent to the development site. Although before connections are established to the water supply it may need to be trucked onto site. As with electrical works, this will be carried out by a suitably qualified contractor. It will be necessary to service the site with a reliable and safe water supply.

Site welfare facilities will be established to provide sanitary facilities for construction workers on site. The main contractor will ensure that sufficient facilities are available at all times to accommodate the number of employees on site. Foul water from the offices and welfare facilities on the site will be removed by a licenced contractor.

In respect of the foregoing, the predicted impacts upon foul sewer, stormwater and potable water are considered to be neutral, imperceptible and short term in nature.

Waste and Waste Management

There will be some waste materials produced in the construction of the proposed scheme which will be disposed of using licensed waste disposal facilities and contractors. The scale of the waste production in conjunction with the use of licensed waste disposal facilities and contractors does not cause concern for likely significant effects on the environment.

Measures should be used is to maximise the quantity of waste recycled by providing sufficient waste recycling infrastructure, waste reduction initiatives and waste collection and waste management information to the residents of the development.

Other than waste generated from materials necessary for the construction of the building the proposed development will not produce significant volumes of waste.

All waste arising during the construction phase will be managed and disposed of in a way that ensures the provisions of the Waste Management Act 1996 and associated amendments and regulations and the Waste Management Plan. In the event, there is excess material with no defined purpose, it will be transported to an authorised soil recovery site or notified to the EPA as a by-product when it will be beneficially used.

It is considered that the proposed development will not have any significant impact in terms of resources or waste generation. A carefully planned approach to waste management as set out in Section 3.5 will ensure that the impact on the environment will be short-term, neutral and imperceptible.

There are no likely significant environmental effects in terms of the material assets, for the proposed development and considering the existing environment and proposed future environment which would warrant preparation of an EIA.

3.7.9.2 Operational Phase

Utilities: Foul Sewer, Stormwater and Potable Water

The proposed development will have an impact upon other material assets such as 'built services and infrastructure' (set out in the EPA Guidelines 2022) such as electricity, telecommunications, gas and water supply.

The proposal will have an impact on servicing and utilities infrastructure in the area, requiring connections to water, electricity, and gas supplies, as well as connecting to the existing road network.

Water supply will be provided via the existing public mains network adjacent to the site. The disposal of foul water from the site will be separated from that of surface water. Wastewater from the proposed development will be directed to the existing foul sewer line along the Main St for treatment in the Drumsna Wastewater Treatment plant. This plant is fully certified by the EPA (Reg No A0467-01).

In respect of the foregoing, the predicted impacts upon foul sewer, stormwater and potable water are considered to be neutral, imperceptible and long term in nature.

Waste and Waste Management

The proposed development will give rise to a variety of waste streams during the operational phase, i.e. when the project is completed, and fully operational.

The majority of waste from the construction phase will be generated from packaging for equipment deliveries to the facility which is likely to be at its peak in the early months of operation.

Measures should be put in place to maximise the quantity of waste recycled by providing sufficient waste recycling infrastructure, waste reduction initiatives and waste collection and waste management information to the residents of the development.

During the operational phase, a structured approach to waste management will promote resource efficiency and waste minimisation. Provided the mitigation measures are implemented and a high rate of waste prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery is achieved, the predicted impact of the operational phase on the environment will be long-term, neutral and imperceptible.

There are no likely significant environmental effects in terms of the material assets, for the proposed development and considering the existing environment and proposed future environment which would warrant preparation of an EIA.

3.7.10 Assessment of potential impacts from interactions and cumulative impacts

Interactions

This section discusses the potential interactions and inter-relationships between the environmental factors discussed in the preceding sections. This section covers both the construction and operational phase of the proposed development.

In accordance with the guidance, not only are the individual significant impacts required to be considered when assessing the impact of a development on the environment, but so must the interrelationships between these factors be identified and assessed.

The majority of the interactions that are considered to have a neutral effect (i.e., no effects or effects that are imperceptible, within the normal bounds of variation or within the margin of forecasting error).

There is a potential interaction between land, soil geology, hydrogeology and hydrology if surface water run-off is poorly managed during the construction phase of the proposed development.

There is a potential for interactions between air quality during construction activities on human health and biodiversity via dust generation. There is a potential for interactions between noise and vibration during construction activities on human health.

However, these are potential interactions are short-term and associated with the construction phase. Minimisation measures will be implemented to ensure that pollution and nuisances arising from demolition, site clearance and construction activities is prevented where possible and managed in accordance with best practice and any subsequent planning conditions relevant to the proposed development.

It is considered that there will be no likely significant interactions which would warrant preparation of an EIAR.

Cumulative Impacts

As part of the assessment of the proposed development, the likelihood of potential cumulative impact of the proposed development has been considered with any future development (as far as practically possible) and the cumulative impacts with developments in the locality (including planned and permitted developments).

The National Planning Application Map was consulted for the previous 5 years to identify notable applications (proposed development), or applications granted permission (permitted development) within that period within 500m of the development site. The National Planning Application Map includes planning application data sourced from the 31 individual local authorities across Ireland. This list of consented development is shown in Appendix A at the end of this report. The review of the online planning tool noted a large number of changes of use, retention and other minor alterations in the vicinity of the proposed development. These proposed and consented development have been, where relevant, considered as a part of the overall project impact.

Cumulative impacts are those impacts that relate to incremental / additive impacts of the planned development in addition to historical, present or foreseeable future actions. Cumulative impacts can be thought of as occurring through two main pathways: first, through persistent additions or losses of the same materials or resource, and second, through the compounding effects as a result of the coming together of two or more effects.

Mitigation is included in the project design to minimise impacts on the receiving environment. Each project currently permitted in the wider area is subject to planning conditions which include appropriate mitigation measures to minimise environmental impacts. Provided that mitigation measures for other developments are implemented as permitted, there will be no significant cumulative effects.

Any future development will be required to incorporate appropriate mitigation measures (e.g. noise management, dust management, traffic management, management of water quality in run-off water, landscape, etc) during the construction phase as such any cumulative development will not have a significant effect on human health, material assets, land, soils, geology, hydrogeology, and hydrology.

Any future development proposed on the surrounding lands should be cognisant with planning laws and will be subject to EIA and/or planning conditions which include appropriate mitigation measures to minimise environmental impacts.

Based on the assessment of the environmental sensitivities in the existing environment and consideration of potential cumulative impacts, it is concluded that there are no likely cumulative environmental impacts which would warrant preparation of an EIAR.

4.0 Finding and Conclusions

The purpose of this EIA Screening Report has been to consider whether there is a requirement for the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) for the proposed development.

The proposed development and component parts have been considered against the thresholds outlined in Schedule 5, Part 2 Class 10 (a) to (m). The most relevant project type in the context of the proposed development is Class 10 (b) (i), (ii) and (iv);

10. Infrastructure projects

(b) (i) Construction of more than 500 dwelling units.

(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.

On the basis of the evaluation set out in Section 2.0 an EIA for the proposed Project is not mandatory. The information necessary to enable this screening assessment has been provided in this report and the methodology used has been informed by the available guidance, legislation and directives.

It is concluded having regard to the nature, scale and location of the subject site, that the proposed development is not likely to have significant effects on the environment (direct, indirect or cumulatively with other development) and therefore it is considered that an environmental impact assessment report is not required in this instance.

Traynor Environmental Ltd. has considered the proposed development and assessed the potential for significant environmental effects and the need for an EIAR on a discretionary basis.

The Appropriate Assessment Screening concluded that due to the scale and nature of the planned works it is considered that the developments within the wider environs will have no likelihood of direct or indirect effects on European sites considered in this assessment in view of their conservation objectives.

The site makes optimum and sustainable use of a greenfield site and will use existing servicing provision as well as being located in close proximity to high frequency public transport links and will have a neutral long term impact on material assets.

Traynor Environmental Ltd. has concluded, there are no likely significant environmental effects on the receiving environment for the proposed development, which would warrant preparation of an EIA.

A mandatory EIA is not required for the proposed development, and as the potential effects are not significant it is submitted by Traynor Environmental Ltd. that there is not a requirement for an EIAR to be submitted with this planning application.

As required by Regulation 299B(1)(b)(ii)(II)(C), the available results of other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment carried out pursuant to European Union legislation other than the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive have been taken into account within this EIA Screening Report.

Appendix A - PLANNING HISTORY

Application Number	Development Description	Development Address	Decision	Grant Date
2086	3 no. attached two-storey dwellings, site development works, landscaping and connection to existing services	Fairgreen, Drumsna, Co. Leitrim	Refused	29/01/2021
15135	for 2 no. semi-detached two-storey dwellings, connection to existing services, entrances, landscaping and associated works	Fairgreen, Drumsna, Co Leitrim	Granted (Conditional)	06/11/2015