



October '24

Title

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
SCREENING REPORT

Development Description

"Cold Weather & Medium Term Support Facility"

Location

Vicar Street, Tuam, Co. Galway

Applicants

Galway County Council

Prepared by:

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Introduction	3
1.1	Purpose of Screening Report	4
1.2	Methodology	4
1.3	Legislation	5
2	The subject site	7
2.1	Site Location & Context	7
2.2	Environmental Sensitivities of the Site	8
5	Mandatory EIA Threshold Screening	14
6	Sub-Threshold EIA Screening	15
7	Screening Exercise	16
7.1	Legislative Context	16
7.2	EIA Screening Assessment	16
8	Conclusions	26

Appendix A – Site Layout Plan

1 INTRODUCTION

This Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report has been prepared on behalf of Galway County Council who propose a “Cold Weather & Medium Term Support Facility” at Vicar Street, Tuam, Co. Galway

The subject site is located within Tuam Town centre, c. 130m to the south-west of the town square. The subject site is comprised of 2 no. pitched roof buildings located along the north-western side of Vicar Street, Tuam. The building to the south-east is two storey, and has been vacant and derelict for over 15 years. The ground floor and existing rear appendage is currently being demolished. The building to the north east consists of a 3 bay three storey building and is also currently vacant. The latter building was previously used as a retail unit and traded under the name “The Bargain Basement”.



Figure 1.1: Google Street View of Existing Buildings.

This application is accompanied by the following reports which have been used to inform the EIA Screening exercise.

- An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (October 2024) prepared by Moore Group- Environmental Services
- An Ecological Impact Assessment (October 2024) prepared by Moore Group- Environmental Services

This Screening Report comprises a desktop EIA screening exercise based on relevant legislation (inc. Schedules 5, 7 and 7A of the Planning & Development Regulations, as amended) which is listed below.

This Screening Report has been prepared by Colette Casey (BSc (Hons) in partnership with James O'Donnell, Planning Consultant (BA, MRUP, Dip APM).

Colette Casey is an experienced and qualified ecologist. She has obtained a bachelor's degree in environmental science (BSc Hons) at the National University of Ireland, Galway. She has been involved in the completion of numerous Appropriate Assessment Screening Reports (AASR's), Natura Impact statements (NIS's), Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMP's), Otter, Hen Harrier and Bat Surveys in the Republic of Ireland. She is an active member of Birdwatch Ireland, Bat conservation Ireland. Colette is a registered member of CIEEM and has been issued a Bat Surveying license by National Parks and Wildlife services. Colette has particular experience in the preparation of EIA Screening Reports for a wide range of public and private projects in the Republic of Ireland.

James O' Donnell is a qualified Town Planner and Project Manager with over 25 years planning experience in both the public and private sector in the west of Ireland, including 6 years' experience as a local authority planning officer. James has extensive experience in the project management and delivery of a wide range of complex planning applications requiring environmental and ecological assessment, in accordance with the requirements of the EU Habitats Directive and EIA Directives. James has particular experience with EIA Screening Reports for a wide range of public and private projects in the Republic of Ireland.

1.1 PURPOSE OF SCREENING REPORT

The purpose of this Screening Report is to determine if an EIA is required for the proposed development as set out in the relevant provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) (the 'Act'), and Schedules 5, 7 and 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 to 2021 (as amended) (the 'Regulations').

1.2 METHODOLOGY

This EIA Screening Report conforms to the provisions of Article 103 and Schedule 7A of the Regulations. This EIA Screening Report has been prepared with regard to the following legislation and documents (where relevant and/or applicable):

- Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended);
- Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2021 (as amended);
- Directive 2011/92/EU¹ as amended by 2014/52/EU²;
- EPA (2015) Advice Notes for Preparing Environmental Impact Statements – Draft September 2015
- EPA (2022) Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports – May 2022;
- EPA (2021) Good Practice Guidance on Cumulative Effects Assessment in Strategic Environmental Assessment.
- European Commission (1999) Guidelines for the Assessment of Indirect and Cumulative Impacts as well as Impact Interactions.
- European Commission (2017) Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects – Guidance on Screening;
- DoEHLG (2003) Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) - Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-Threshold Development; and
- DoHPLG (2018) Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment – August 2018.
- Office of the Planning Regulator (June 2021) “*OPR Practice Note PN02 – Environmental impact Assessment Screening.*”

This Screening Report comprises a desktop EIA screening exercise based on relevant legislation (inc. Schedules 7 and 7A of the Regulations), the best practice guidance and the Screening Checklist provided in the European Commission (2017) Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects – Guidance on Screening.

1.3 LEGISLATION

As further described in Section 4 of this Screening Report, this project consists of the proposed “*Cold Weather & Medium Term Support Facility*” at Vicar Street, Tuam, Co. Galway

As it pertains to the proposed development, the requirement to complete an EIA as per Directive 2014/52/EU amending Directive 2011/92/EU is transposed into Irish legislation primarily via the:

- Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) (the ‘Act’); and
- Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) (the ‘Regulations’).

¹ Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment

² Directive 2014/52/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 amending Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment.

Pursuant to Article 81(ca) of the Regulations 2001, a Planning Authority must indicate its conclusion under article 120(1)(b)(i) (a preliminary examination) or screening determination under article 120(1B)(b)(i) in the public notices that form part of a Section 179 process.

Where a local authority proposes to carry out a subthreshold development, the authority shall carry out a preliminary examination of, at the least, the nature, size, or location of the development.

Where the local authority concludes, based on such preliminary examination, that—

- (i) there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall conclude that an EIA is not required,
- (ii) there is significant and realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall prepare, or cause to be prepared, the information specified in Schedule 7A for the purposes of a screening determination, or
- (iii) there is a real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall—
 - _(I) conclude that the development would be likely to have such effects, and (II) prepare, or cause to be prepared, an EIAR in respect of the development.

2 THE SUBJECT SITE

2.1 SITE LOCATION & CONTEXT

The proposed development is located within the centre of the Town of Tuam, the site is surrounded by commercial and residential developments. The proposed development includes part demolition, alterations and extensions to 2 no. buildings. The can be described as an infill and part brownfield site (owning to the existing buildings onsite).

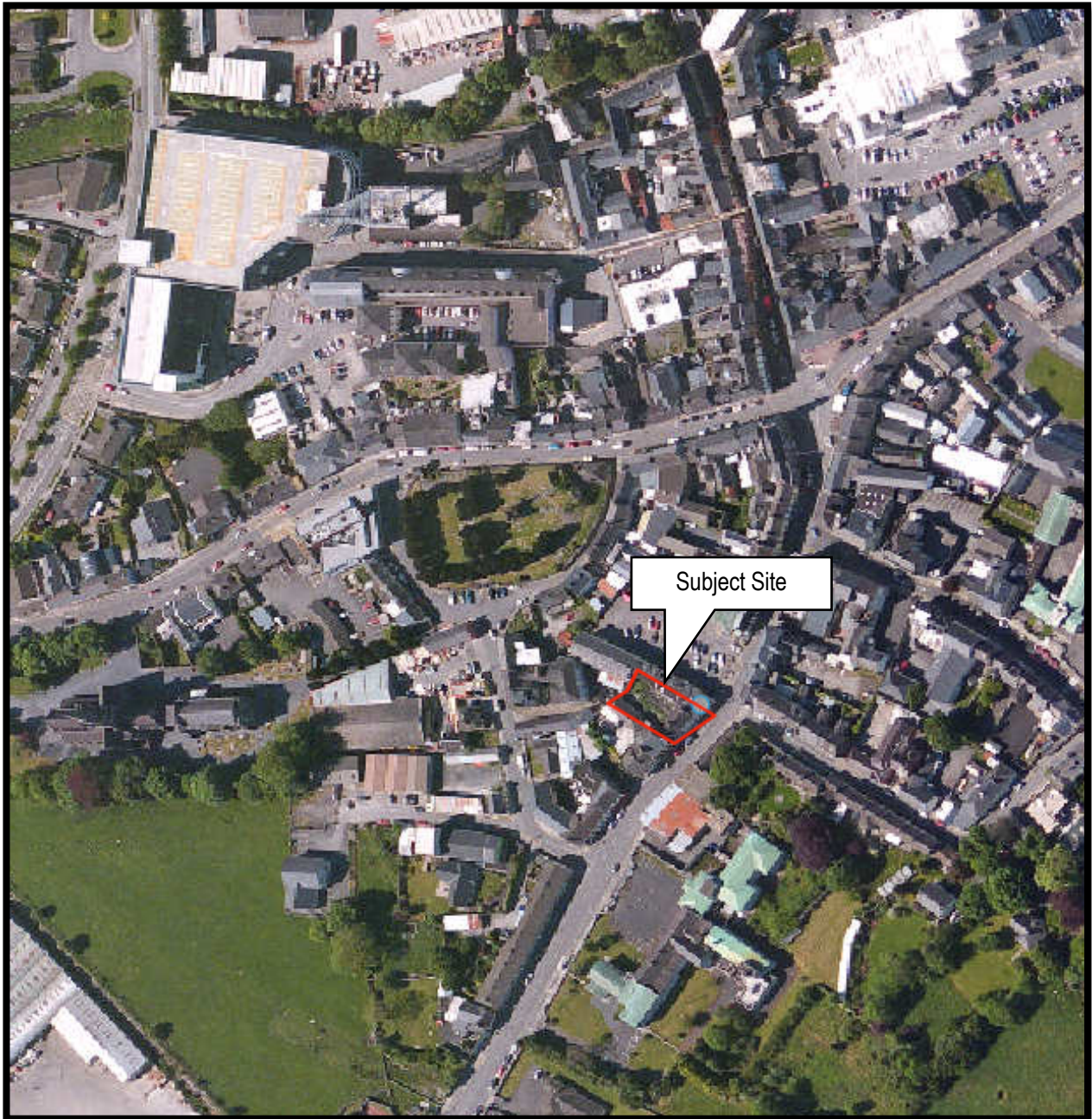


Figure 2.1: Aerial photo extract showing indicative location of subject site in Tuam

3 ENVIRONMENTAL SENSITIVITIES OF THE SITE

3.1.1 Soils

The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) website was consulted for available geological / hydrological information. The site is underlain by limestone till.

The groundwater vulnerability within the site is valued at Moderate (M). Vulnerability is a term used to represent the intrinsic geological and hydrogeological characteristics that determine the ease at which groundwater may be contaminated by human activities. Although the vulnerability on site is classified as “Moderate “ due to the nature and scale of the proposed development there are no impacts/effects predicted in this regard.

3.1.2 Hydrology

The closest major water feature in the area is the Nanny (Tuam)_030 on EPA website and catchments.ie, which is located c.252 metres from the application site to the east (straight line measurement). The EPA has rated the value of the river as ‘Poor’ for the Ecological Status or Potential under the SW 2016 _2021 and has a medium confidence value. However, there are no direct or indirect hydrological connector/receptor pathways between the application site and the Nanny (Tuam) River; therefore, no impacts/effects are predicted in this regard.

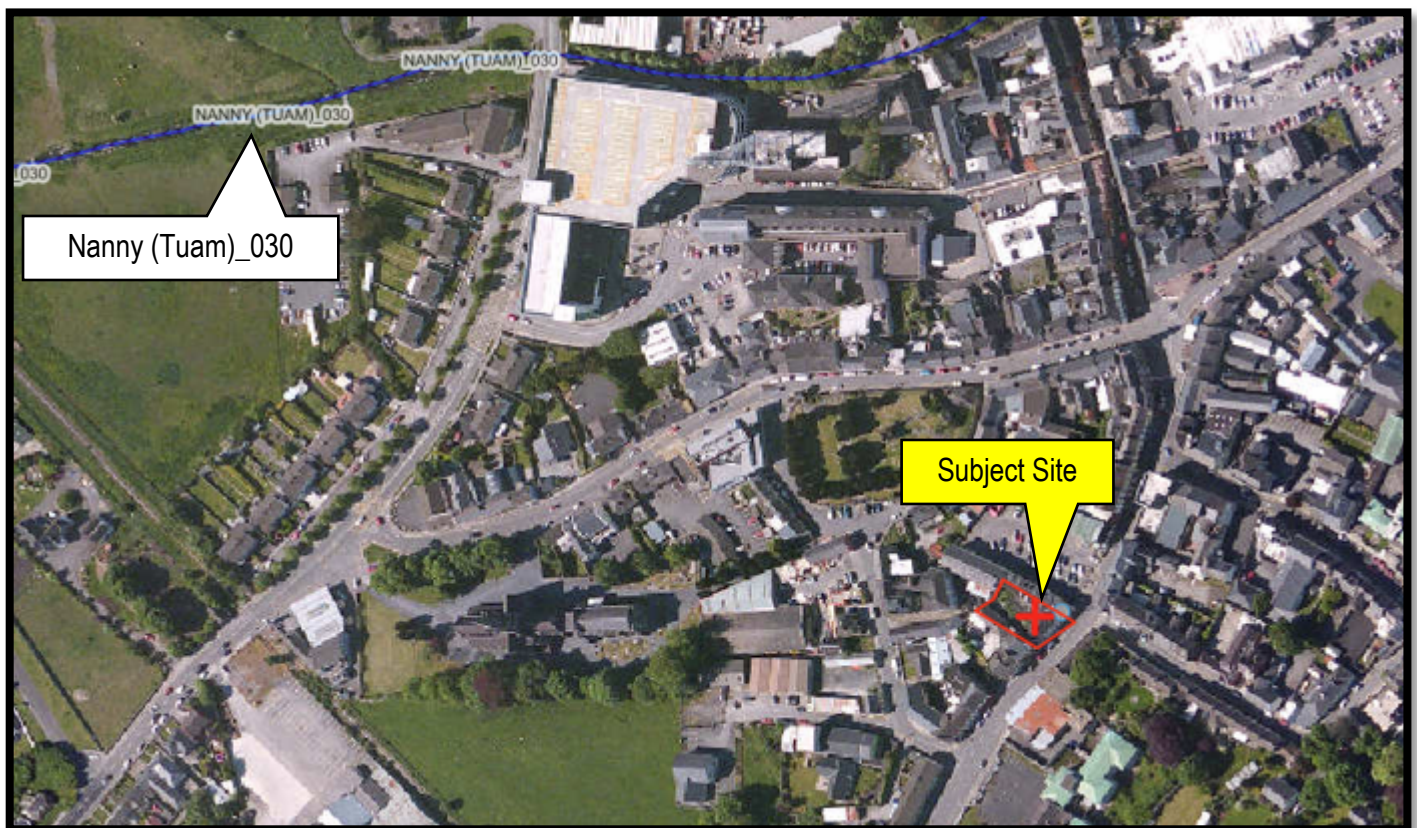


Figure 3.1- Site in relation to Nanny (Tuam)_030 Waterbody

The application site is located on the Clare-Corrib Groundwater waterbody. The EPA has rated the overall groundwater status as 'Good'. Due to the nature and scale of the proposed development, no impacts/effects are predicted on the Clare-Corrib groundwater body.

3.1.3 Air Quality

The Air Quality Index Regions indicate that Air Quality Index is 3. The Area is listed as Rural Ireland, Zone D. Due to the nature and scale of the proposed development, no long-term impacts/effects on air quality are predicted. An "Asbestos Refurbishment Survey" was prepared for the project. In this regard, no "Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM's)" were identified.

3.1.4 Natura 2000 Network

The Lough Corrib SAC lies 2.08km northwest of the application site. No impacts/effects are predicted on Lough Corrib SAC. No There are no pathways or connectivity to the habitats and/or species of this site.

As per the "Appropriate Assessment Screening Report" prepared by Moore Group- Environmental Services, there is no identifiable pathways and no identifiable connectivity to any European Sites considered in the assessment. This report concludes *"It can be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on any European site, in the absence of any mitigation"*.

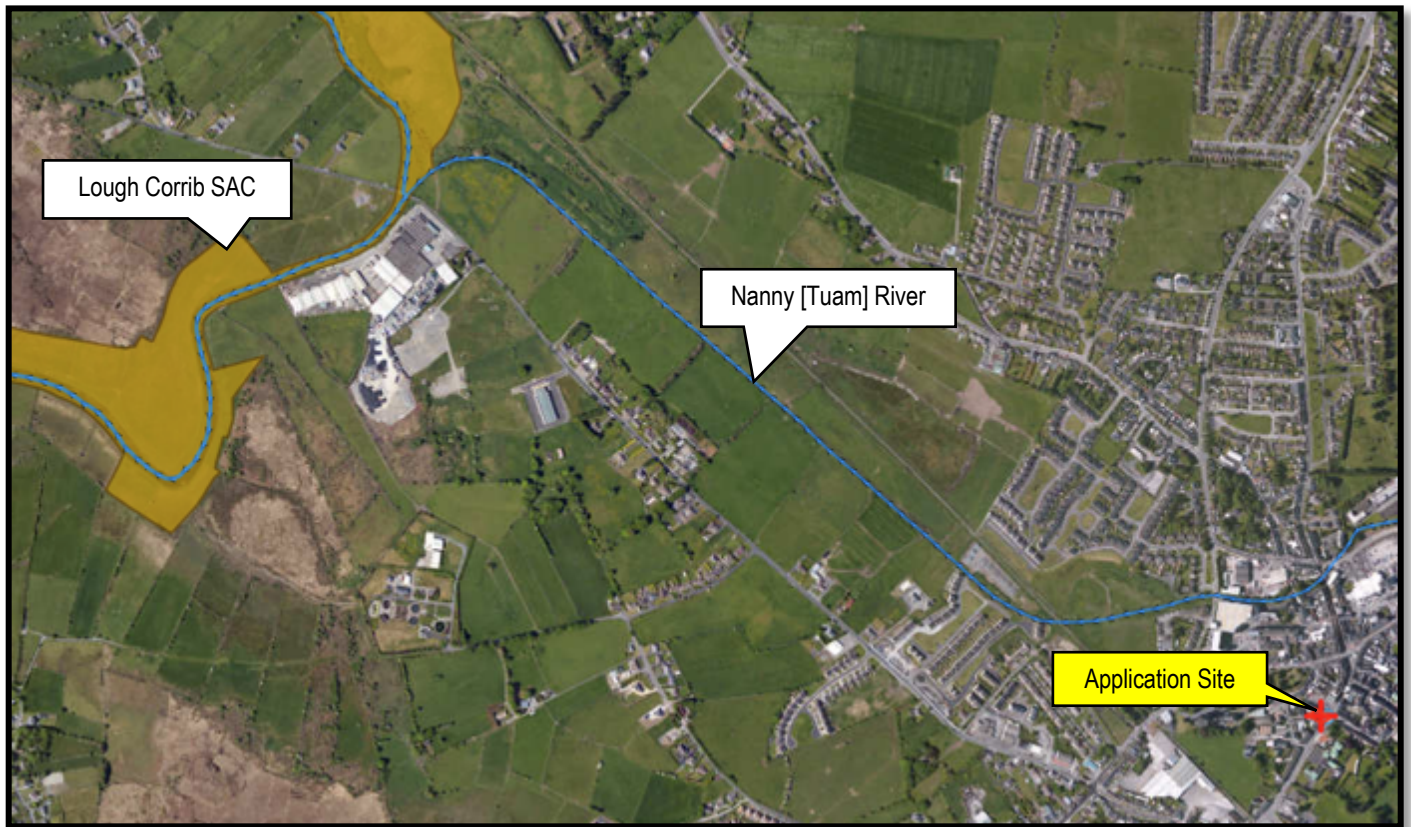


Figure 3.2- Site in relation to Lough Corrib SAC

3.1.5 Natural Heritage Areas

There are no Natural Heritage Areas (NHA's) or proposed NHA's (pNHA's) within in the vicinity of the proposed development. The nearest NHA to the proposed development is Derrynagran Bog And Esker NHA which is located 13.81km to the east. The nearest pNHA to the proposed development is Knockavanny Turlough pNHA which is located 4.34km to the north-east. It should be noted that there is no ecological and/or hydrological connection between the application site and NHA/pNHA's and therefore, no impacts/effects are predicted.

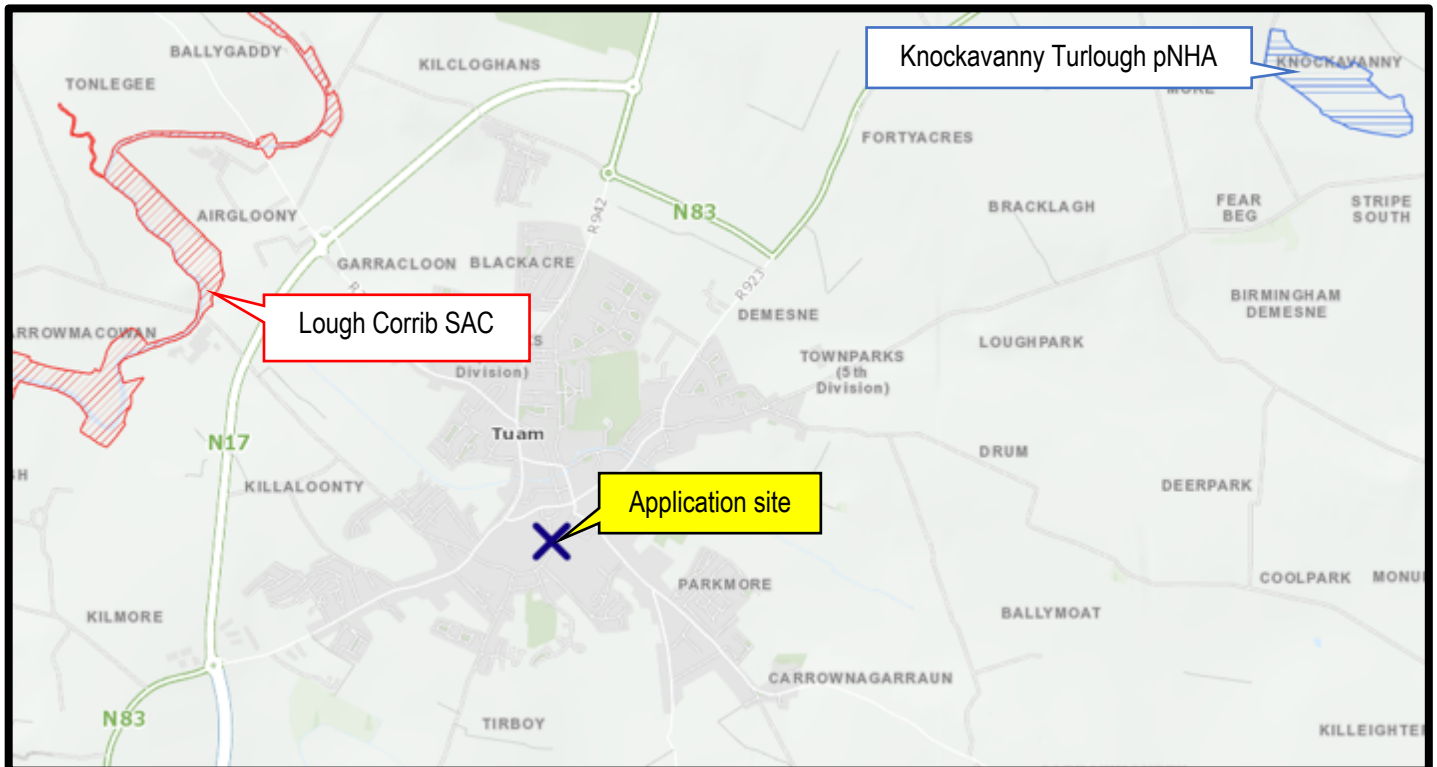


Figure 3.3: Extract from <https://www.npws.ie/> showing location of subject site relative pNHA's in the wider area.

3.1.6 Ecology

An Ecological Impact Assessment has been prepared by Moore Group- Environmental Services.

The subject site is not ecologically sensitive, and no impacts/effects are predicted.

3.1.7 Built Heritage

There are no Protected Structures on site. The subject site is located within an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA), under the provisions of the Tuam Local Area Plan 2023-2029. The subject site is located within an Archaeological Zone of Notification.

4 RELEVANT LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

Section 172 of the Act (as amended) states:

(1) An environmental impact assessment shall be carried out by the planning authority or the Board, as the case may be, in respect of an application for consent for proposed development where either —

(a) the proposed development would be of a class specified in —

(i) Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, and either —

(I) such development would equal or exceed, as the case may be, any relevant quantity, area or other limit specified in that Part, or

(II) no quantity, area or other limit is specified in that Part in respect of the development concerned,

or

(ii) Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 and either —

(I) such development would equal or exceed, as the case may be, any relevant quantity, area or other limit specified in that Part, or

(II) no quantity, area or other limit is specified in that Part in respect of the development concerned,

or

(b) (i) the proposed development would be of a class specified in Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 but does not equal or exceed, as the case may be, the relevant quantity, area or other limit specified in that Part, and

(ii) it is concluded, determined or decided, as the case may be, —

by a planning authority, in exercise of the powers conferred on it by this Act or the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (S.I. No. 600 of 2001),

(I) by the Board, in exercise of the powers conferred on it by this Act or those regulations,

- (II) by a local authority in exercise of the powers conferred on it by regulation 120 of those regulations,*
- (III) by a State authority, in exercise of the powers conferred on it by regulation 123A of those regulations,*
- (IV) in accordance with section 13A of the Foreshore Act, by the appropriate Minister (within the meaning of that Act), or*
- (V) by the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment, in exercise of the powers conferred on him or her by section 8A of the Minerals Development Act 1940, that the proposed development is likely to have a significant*

5 MANDATORY EIA THRESHOLD SCREENING

As per Step 1(b) of the OPR Guidance, an assessment as to whether a Mandatory EIA is required, needs to be carried out.

Schedule 5 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (As amended) prescribes the classes and scale of development which require EIA.

There is no class set out under Part 1 of Schedule 5 in relation to the provision of "Housing".

It is noted that Part 2 class 10(b)(i) refers to;

"Construction of more than 500 dwelling units."

In response, the proposed development / accommodation does not exceed this threshold.

It is noted that Part 2 class 10(b)(iv) refers to;

"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 response, the proposed site area is 0.0429 ha with a gross floor area of approximately 598sqm, and therefore does not exceed this threshold.

Finally, it is noted that class 13 refers to;

"(a) Any change or extension of development already authorized, executed or in the process of being executed (not being a change or extension referred to in Part 1) which would: -

(i) result in the development being of a class listed in Part 1 or paragraphs 1 to 12 of Part 2 of this Schedule, and

(ii) result in an increase in size greater than –

- 25 per cent, or

- an amount equal to 50 per cent of the appropriate threshold, whichever is the greater."

In response, the proposed development does not meet these criteria and therefore, does not exceed this threshold.

Due to the modest scale of the proposed development, the project is not of a class of development in Schedule 5, Parts 1 and 2. Accordingly, there is no mandatory requirement for EIA in this case.

6 SUB-THRESHOLD EIA SCREENING

Article 103(1) of the Regulations states:

103(1) (a) Where a planning application for sub-threshold development is not accompanied by an EIAR, the planning authority shall carry out a preliminary examination of, at the least, the nature, size or location of the development.

(b) Where the planning authority concludes, based on such preliminary examination, that—

(i) there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall conclude that an EIA is not required,

(ii) there is significant and realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall, by notice in writing served on the applicant, require the applicant to submit to the authority the information specified in Schedule 7A for the purposes of a screening determination unless the applicant has already provided such information, or

(iii) there is a real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall—

(i) conclude that the development would be likely to have such effects, and

(ii) by notice in writing served on the applicant, require the applicant to submit to the authority an EIAR and to comply with the requirements of article 105.

In accordance with Article 103(1)(a)(ii), the provision of “*information specified in Schedule 7A for the purposes of a screening determination*” has been prepared in the interest of due diligence.

In this regard it should be noted that the DoEHLG Guidance³ with respect to EIA Sub Threshold Screening states that “*...it is not intended that special studies or technical evaluations will be necessary for the purpose of making a decision.*”

In this context, this screening exercise relies on available information.

³ DoEHLG (2003) Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) - Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-Threshold Development.

7 SCREENING EXERCISE

7.1 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

Schedule 7A of the Regulations also requires that the following information is provided:

“1. A description of the proposed development, including in particular—

(a) a description of the physical characteristics of the whole proposed development and, where relevant, of demolition works, and

(b) a description of the location of the proposed development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected.

2. A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development.

3. A description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, of the proposed development on the environment resulting from—

(a) the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant, and

(b) the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity.

4. The compilation of the information at paragraphs 1 to 3 shall take into account, where relevant, the criteria set out in Schedule 7.”

Where relevant and in accordance with Article 103 (1A)(b) of Regulations⁴, the information provided below may be accompanied by a “description of the 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”.

7.2 EIA SCREENING ASSESSMENT

The checklist for EIA Screening Assessment is set out in Table 1 below. This is adapted from OPR EIA Screening Guidance⁵. This checklist is designed to address the requirements of Schedules 7 and 7A of the Regulations and to inform the Planning Authority’s EIA determination in this case.

⁴ As inserted by SI 296 of 2018 *European Union (Planning and Development)(Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018*

⁵ OPR Practice Not PN02 Environmental Impact Assessment Screening

Table 1: Checklist for EIA Screening Assessment

A.Screening Determination		
Planning Register Reference:	N/A	
Development Summary:	<i>"Cold Weather & Medium Term Support Facility."</i>	
	Yes/No/N/A:	Comment (If Relevant):
Does the application include information specified in Schedule 7A?	Yes	In accordance with Article 103(1)(a)(ii), the provision of <i>"information specified in Schedule 7A for the purposes of a screening determination"</i> has been prepared in the interest of due diligence.
Other relevant information submitted:	Yes	• An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (October 2024) prepared by Moore Group- Environmental Services • An Ecological Impact Assessment (October 2024) prepared by Moore Group- Environmental Services • Archaeological Impact Assessment (June 2024) prepared by Atlantic Archaeology • Building Conservation Assessment (September 2024) prepared by ACP Architectural Conservation Professionals. • An "Asbestos Refurbishment Survey" (June 2024) prepared by Higgins Consultancy.
Does the application include a NIS and/or other reports to enable AA screening?	Yes	An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been prepared.
Is an IED/IPC/Waste Licence or Waste Water Discharge Authorisation (or review of licence/ authorisation) required from the EPA for the subject development?	No	N/A
If YES has the EPA been consulted?		N/A
Have any other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment been carried out pursuant to other relevant Directives –for example SEA or AA?		An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report prepared by Moore Group- Environmental Services. This does not indicate any identifiable connector/receptor pathway from the application site to the Lough Corrib SAC.
B. Examination		
1. Characteristics of proposed development- (Including demolition, construction, operation, or decommissioning):		
	If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of the development (i.e. the nature and extent):	
a) The size and design of the whole of the proposed development (including any demolition works):	<i>"Cold Weather & Medium Term Support Facility."</i> The subject site is comprised of 2 no. pitched roof buildings located along the north-western side of Vicar Street, Tuam. The building to the south-east is two storey, and has been vacant and derelict for over 15 years. The ground floor and existing rear appendage is currently being demolished. The building to the north east consists of a 3 bay three storey	

	building and is also currently vacant. The latter building was previously used as a retail unit and traded under the name 'The Bargain Basement'. The proposed development is located within the centre of the Town of Tuam, the site is surrounded by commercial and residential developments. The proposed development includes part demolition, alterations and extensions to 2 no. buildings. The can be described as an infill and part brownfield site (owning to the existing buildings onsite).
(b) Other existing or permitted projects (including under other legislation that is subject to EIA) that could give rise to cumulative effects:	A search was carried out on Galway City Council's online planning query system. It was ascertained that there has been ten other local planning application granted within a 300m radius of the site in the past 5 years, which are listed below: PI Ref no – 201806 - for the demolition of an existing derelict building and for the revised development (from that previously granted under planning permission reference number 18/336) for the construction of two number apartment units and all associated site works; Gross floor space of proposed works; 147sqm; Gross floor space of any demolition; 102sqm PI Ref no – 201821- for the retention of 'change of use' of first-floor vacant office space to a first-floor apartment and a new rear balcony. Gross floor space of proposed works: 306 sqm. Gross floor space of work to be retained: 306 sqm PI Ref no – 211328 - for change of use of Ground Floor of Hairdressing shop, and to amalgamate this area with ancillary first and second floors over, to form a single use dwelling house, at Valentine's Hairdressing shop Dublin Road Tuam PI Ref no – 211402- for the re-development of an existing commercial and residential site. 1) demolition of existing substandard 2 storey and single storey flat roofed section which previously comprised of the nightclub and lounge bar of the public house, located to the rear of building fronting onto Vicar street, and a single storey commercial building currently occupied by 'Apache Pizza' and part of the former nightclub, fronting onto Circular road 2) Construction of a new 4 storey building to comprise of 8 no. apartments with access from Circular road. Bin storage area and bicycle parking to be provided 3) Second storey extension and alterations to front facade to existing 2 storey building fronting onto Vicar street (formerly 'The Sportsman Inn' public house) and provision of 1 no. apartment over first and second floor level in this building 4) Conversion of the existing ground floor level of the same building (Formerly front bar of 'The Sportsman Inn') from public house into commercial unit 5) amalgamation of 2 no. existing commercial units (formerly an Off-licence and 'SAB Fashions') located at ground floor level of an existing 3 storey building which fronts onto Vicar Street, into 1 larger commercial unit and replacing of the existing facades at street level with one new facade. 6) Alterations to existing accommodation space in the same existing 3 storey building fronting onto Vicar street, currently comprising of 2 no.2 bedroom units, to be reduced to 2 no. 1bedroom apartments at first and second floor level respectively. 7) All ancillary works. Gross floor space of proposed works: 752.07 sqm. Gross

	floor space of work to be retained: 225.77 sqm. Gross floor space of any demolition: 402. 5 sqm PI Ref no – 211443 - change of use of an existing ground floor unit at Circular Road, Tuam from retail to Take away restaurant use to be occupied by 'Apache Pizza', along with associated signage and all other associated works. PI Ref no – 21415 - of a change of use of a retail unit to take away coffee house/ café and burger bar in the premises known as 'Niche' and all associated works: Gross floor space of work to be retained: 81 sqm PI Ref no – 22721- for a development consisting of: Shopfront alterations to a protected structure (Ref No. 30331013) which comprise of: fitting of new branded signage (after removal of existing signage/or over existing signage) onto existing shopfront, replacement of existing ATM with new ATM (location retained). 2No. internally located digital marketing LED screens, to be viewed externally through the existing glazing. Minor internal alterations to existing front banking hall to consist of new internal SSBM/ATMs within a new room. These proposed works are to a protected structure. Gross floor space of works to be retained: 418sqm. PI Ref no – 23129 - for change of use of existing building from residential to a day service for people with intellectual disabilities and for modification of elevations and internal layout PI Ref no –23416- for replacement of existing high level fascia signage with specsavers corporate image, which includes illuminated pod, individual lettering to fascia board & projecting sign, also 2 rows of manifestation to glazing on shopfront windows PI Ref no – 23442 for modifications to existing dwelling, including alteration of elevations, removal of chimneys & porch, re-roofing & external insulation PI Ref no – 2360025 - for change of use from bar to restaurant/takeaway use including modifications to internal layout & front elevation with associated signage. Gross floor area of proposed works: 143sqm PI Ref no – 2460194 - of ground floor extension to existing restaurant /take-away. Gross floor space of work to be retained: 86.18 sqm
(c) Use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity: Will construction or the operation of the proposal use natural resources such as land, soil, water, materials or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or are in short supply?	Water and fuel will be required during the construction phase of the development. This is not predicted to cause significant impacts. Given that the proposed development will involve the upgrading and extension to the existing buildings on site, there will be no removal of tree lines, hedgerows, no impacts are predicted on biodiversity in this regard.
(d) Production of waste: Will the proposal produce solid wastes during construction, operation, or decommissioning?	The site area is relatively small/modest. Topsoil and limited C&D waste will be disposed of in accordance with a “Construction Waste Management Plan” (CWMP), which is a standard feature of a development proposal. In accordance with best practice, any waste from the proposed development will be recycled or

	reused where possible. If recycling or reuse is not possible waste should be disposed of by an authorized waste facility. Following a survey, no "Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM's)" were identified.
(e) Pollution and nuisances: Will the proposal release pollutants to ground or surface water, or air (including noise and vibrations) or water, or lead to exceeding environmental standards set out in other Directives?	During the demolition of the existing derelict buildings on-site, there will likely be an increase in air pollution in terms of dust. However, this will be short-term in duration and so, no adverse impacts/effects are predicted in this regard. As with any similar development, there is potential for dust and noise pollution during construction. Construction related traffic is also anticipated. No deep excavations are required; therefore, no significant noise impacts are anticipated. However, the construction phase is likely to be short term and owing to the location scale of the proposed development, together with the construction stage stormwater management proposals outlined and industrial norms for noise control, no significant impacts are predicted in this regard. The proposed development will connect to the existing public sewer. No impacts are predicted in this regard. Surface water runoff will ultimately discharge to the existing storm sewer. No impacts are predicted due to these systems and the proposed connections to the existing sewers.
(f) Major accidents and disasters: In accordance with scientific knowledge, is there a risk of major accidents and/or disasters which are relevant to the project, including those caused by climate change?	None. No COMAH or Seveso sites are located within the vicinity.
(g) Risks to human health, for example due to water contamination or air pollution:	During the demolition phase, there will likely be an increase in air pollution in terms of dust. However, this will be short-term in duration and so, no adverse impacts/effects are predicted in this regard. Construction impacts including noise, dust, construction, and haulage traffic. No adverse impacts are predicted in this regard. At the operational stage, the proposed residential development could give rise to noise and increased lighting. No adverse impacts are predicted in this regard. Having regard to the nature and extent of the proposed development at this location, no significant risks to human health are identified. The proposed development will connect to the existing public sewer. No impacts are predicted in this regard. Surface water runoff will ultimately discharge to the existing storm sewer. No impacts are predicted due to these systems and the proposed connections to the existing sewers.

2. Location of proposed development:	
The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development: If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of the location (with particular regard to the (a) existing and approved land use, (b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources, and (c) the absorption capacity of the environment):	
(a) Generally, describe the location of the site and its surroundings:	The subject site is comprised of 2 no. pitched roof buildings located along the north-western side of Vicar Street, Tuam. The building to the south-east is two storey, and has been vacant and derelict for over 15 years. The ground floor and existing rear appendage is currently being demolished. The building to the north east consists of a 3 bay three storey building and is also currently vacant. The latter building was previously used as a retail unit and traded under the name 'The Bargain Basement'. The proposed development is located within the centre of the Town of Tuam, the site is surrounded by commercial and residential developments. The proposed development includes alterations to 2 no. buildings. The can be described as an infill and part brownfield site (owning to the existing buildings onsite).
(b) Is the project located within, close to or has it the potential to impact on any site specified in Article 103(3)(a)(v) of the Regulations: — European site — NHA/pNHA — Designated Nature Reserve — Designated refuge for flora or fauna — Place, site or feature of ecological interest, the preservation, conservation, protection of which is an objective of a development plan/ local area plan/ draft plan or variation of a plan.	No. The Lough Corrib SAC lies 2.08km northwest of the application site. No impacts/effects are predicted on Lough Corrib SAC. No There are no pathways or connectivity to the habitats and/or species of this site. The closest major water feature in the area is the Nanny (Tuam)_030 on EPA website and catchments.ie, which is located c.252 metres from the application site to the east (straight line measurement). The EPA has rated the value of the river as 'Poor' for the Ecological Status or Potential under the SW 2016 _2021 and has a medium confidence value. There are no Natural Heritage Areas (NHA's) or proposed NHA's (pNHA's) within in the vicinity of the proposed development. The nearest NHA to the proposed development is Derrynagran Bog And Esker NHA which is located 13.81km to the east. The nearest pNHA to the proposed development is Knockavanny Turlough pNHA which is located 4.34km to the north-east. It should be noted that there is no ecological and/or hydrological connection between the application site and NHA/pNHA's and therefore, no impacts/effects are predicted.
(c) Are there any other areas on or around the location that are important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology e.g. wetlands, watercourses or other waterbodies (including riparian areas and river mouths), the coastal zone and the marine environment, mountains, forests or woodlands, that could be affected by the project?	No.
(d) Is the proposal likely to be highly visible to many people? Are there any areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location, or are there any routes or facilities that are used by the public	No, the proposed development is changes to existing buildings within the Town Centre of Tuam. No impacts are predicted.

for recreation or other facilities which could be affected by the proposal?	
(e) Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location that could be affected by the project?	No.
(f) Are there areas within or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, or occupied by sensitive land uses e.g., hospitals, schools, places of worship, community facilities that could be affected by the proposal?	Yes, the subject site is surrounded by development. It is not expected that surrounding land uses would be adversely affected by the proposed development at this location.
(g) Are there any areas within or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources e.g. groundwater, surface waters, forestry, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, minerals, that could be affected by the proposal?	No.
(h) Are there any areas within or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage, and where there has already been a failure in environmental standards that could be affected by the proposal e.g. the status of water bodies under the Water Framework Directive?	The closest major water feature in the area is the Nanny (Tuam)_030 on EPA website and catchments.ie, which is located c.252 metres from the application site to the east (straight line measurement). The EPA has rated the value of the river as 'Poor' for the Ecological Status or Potential under the SW 2016 _2021 and has a medium confidence value.
(i) Is the site located in an area susceptible to subsidence, landslides, erosion, or flooding which could cause the proposal to present environmental problems?	No.
(j) Are there any additional considerations that are specific to this location?	No.

3. Types and characteristics of potential impacts:

If relevant, briefly describe the characteristics of the potential impacts under the headings below. (Including where relevant the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (e.g., geographical areas and size of population likely to be affected), nature of impact, intensity and complexity of impact, probability of impact, and duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact):	If relevant, briefly describe any mitigation measures proposed to avoid or prevent a significant effect.	Is this likely to result in significant effects on the environment?
Population and human health:		
In the absence of standard construction phase best practice/control measures, there may be possible short-term nuisances to human beings in neighbouring properties from noise and dust during the construction phase. These are not likely to be at such a quantity or of such a significance that would warrant the completion of a sub-threshold EIAR. Noise and dust	Standard construction phase control measures.	No. The residual construction impacts are temporary and are not considered to be significant. The operation impacts are not likely to be

or pollution will be subject to standard best practice/control measures as per typical construction projects.		significant due to the noise and increase in traffic.
Biodiversity, with particular attention to species and habitats protected under the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive: *		
Impacts from loss/ fragmentation of habitat, disturbance and displacement are not likely to occur due to the lack of hydrological connector/receptor pathways and the physical barriers between the application site and the Lough Corrib SAC.	N/A.	No. This is due to the lack of hydrological connectors/receptors pathways and physical barriers present between the application site and the Lough Corrib SAC.
The removal of vegetation on site including trees and hedgerows may result in short-term disturbance to local bat populations, however, standard construction phase control measures will reduce potential impacts/effects.	Standard construction phase control measures.	No. The residual impact is not considered to be significant.
Land, soil, water, air and climate:		
The loss of grassland is not considered to be significant.	N/A	No
The flat nature of the land and ground conditions mean that there is no likelihood of soil erosion or impact on soil stability. Construction will be at near surface reducing the need for large scale excavation.	N/A	No
Potential risk to water quality of groundwater.	At construction phase, Surface water runoff and sources of contaminants during construction will be managed in accordance with industry best practice. The proposed development will connect to the existing public sewer. No impacts are predicted in this regard. Surface water runoff will ultimately discharge to the existing storm sewer. No impacts are predicted due to these systems and the proposed connections to the existing sewers.	No. The residual risk is considered to be low once standard best practice/control measures are implemented.
Material assets, cultural heritage and the landscape: *		
In terms of material assets, the most relevant in this case is the existing road network. In this regard, the site is easily accessed from the existing road, where the 50kmph urban speed limit applies.	In relation to cultural heritage, there are no protected structures on site. Notwithstanding, a Building	No. The residual risk is considered to be low once archaeological mitigation measures are adhered to.

	Conservation Report was prepared for the project. The subject site is located within an Architectural Conservation Area. Under the provisions of the Tuam LAP, Policy Objective TKT 29 aims to <i>“Protect, conserve and enhance the essential character of the Tuam Architectural Conservation Area, through respecting the surviving historic plots and street patterns and through the appropriate management and control of the design, location and layout of new development, alterations or extensions to existing structures, and/or modifications to the setting of the structure and the character of the Architectural Conservation Area. The identification of areas of special interest within the Plan boundary may be considered during the lifetime of the Plan.”</i> In response, the proposed design will result in a positive architectural intervention at the part derelict and vacant buildings. Therefore, given that the proposal will <i>“enhance the essential character”</i> of this part of the ACA, no mitigation is required. Owing to the historical location of the site within Tuam town centre, an Archaeological Impact Assessment was prepared for project. This recommended standard Archaeological mitigation measures.	
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	In terms of the landscape, given that the proposed development is located within a built up urban environment, no mitigation is required in this regard.	
Cumulative Effects:		
No cumulative effects are identified.	N/A	No
Transboundary Effects:		
The site is remote from any transboundary location and the nature of the development is such that any impact would not affect a large geographical area.	N/A	No
4. Additional Considerations:		
Further relevant information, if any, relating to how the results of any other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment have been taken into account (e.g. SEA, AA screening, AA):	As per the "Appropriate Assessment Screening Report" prepared by Moore Group-Environmental Services, there is no identifiable pathways and no identifiable connectivity to any European Sites considered in the assessment. This report concludes "It can be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on any European site, in the absence of any mitigation".	
Other relevant information/ considerations of note:	No	
C. Determination:		
No real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.	X	EIAR is not required
Real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.		EIAR is required
D. Main Reasons and Considerations:		
See Conclusions below		

8 CONCLUSIONS

Planning is being sought for a *“Cold Weather & Medium Term Support Facility”* at Vicar Street, Tuam, Co. Galway

As noted in Section 3, owing to the nature and scale of the proposed development, there is no mandatory requirement for EIA to be completed under the relevant legislation in this case. In accordance with Article 103(1)(a)(ii), the provision of *“information specified in Schedule 7A for the purposes of a screening determination”* has been prepared in the interest of due diligence.

Given the scale and nature of the project and taking account of the documentation which accompanies the project, the overall probability of impacts on the receiving environment arising from the proposed development (during the construction or operational phases) is considered to be low.

This EIA Screening Assessment has determined that the characteristics of the proposed development are considered not significant due to the location, nature, and scale of the proposed development. The subject site is not located in an environmentally sensitive site. In any event, the proposed development will implement best practice construction methodologies to avoid any significant impacts.

No significant environmental impacts are likely to occur once the proposals outlined in the application are implemented.

The proposed development will connect to the existing public sewer. No impacts are predicted in this regard.

Surface water runoff will ultimately discharge to the existing storm sewer.

No impacts are predicted due to these systems and the proposed connections to the existing sewers.

The information provided in this EIA Screening Report can be used by the competent authority, to conclude that the proposed development would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment and that the preparation and submission of an environmental impact assessment report (EIAR) is not required in this case.

Appendix A – Site Layout Plan

