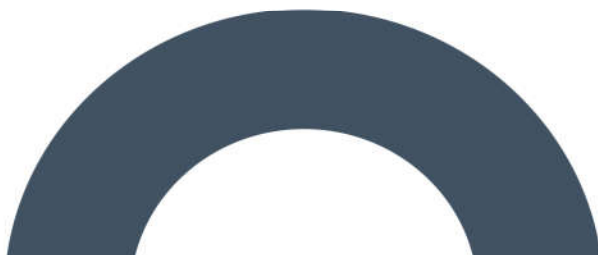
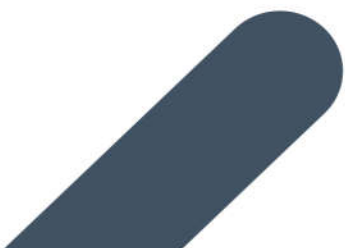


Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

Proposed Amenity Area
Upgrade at Long Point,
Loughrea, Co. Galway





DOCUMENT DETAILS

Client: **Galway County Council**

Project Title: **Proposed Amenity Area Upgrade at Long Point, Loughrea, Co. Galway**

Project Number: **220727 - a**

Document Title: **Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report**

Document File Name: **Amenity Area at Long Point Loughrea EIASR F - 2024.09.24 - 220727-a**

Prepared By: **MKO
Tuam Road
Galway
Ireland
H91 VW84**



Rev	Status	Date	Author(s)	Approved By
01	D1	11/09/2024	EC	VK
02	F	24/09/2024	EC	TM

Table of Contents

1.	INTRODUCTION.....	2
1.1	Statement of Authority.....	3
2.	DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT.....	4
2.1	Site Location and Description.....	4
2.2	The Proposed Development.....	8
2.3	Construction Methodology.....	8
2.3.1	Proposed works at the Existing Changing Area.....	9
3.	EIA SCREENING METHODOLOGY	15
3.1	Legislative Context.....	15
3.2	Methodology and Guidance	15
3.3	Mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment.....	16
3.3.1	Schedule 5, Part 2.....	17
3.4	Sub-Threshold Assessment.....	17
3.5	Schedule 7 Criteria.....	19
3.5.1	Characteristics of the Proposed Development	19
3.5.1.1	Size and Design of the Whole Proposed Development.....	19
3.5.1.2	Cumulation with Other Existing and Permitted Developments.....	20
3.5.1.3	Nature of any Associated Demolition Works.....	23
3.5.1.4	Use of Natural Resources.....	23
3.5.1.5	Production of Waste.....	24
3.5.1.6	Pollution and Nuisances.....	24
3.5.1.7	Risk of Major Accidents including those caused by Climate Change	25
3.5.1.8	Risk to Human Health	25
3.5.2	Location of the Proposed Development	25
3.5.2.1	Existing and Approved Land Use	25
3.5.2.2	Abundance, Availability, Quality and Regenerative Capacity of Natural Resources.....	26
3.5.2.3	Absorption Capacity of the Natural Environment.....	26
3.5.3	Characteristics of Potential Impacts.....	28
3.5.3.1	Population and Human Health	28
3.5.3.2	Biodiversity.....	29
3.5.3.3	Land, Soil, Water, Air and Climate	36
3.5.3.4	Material Assets, Cultural Heritage, and the Landscape.....	38
3.5.3.5	Interactions	39
3.5.4	Summary of Schedule 7 Criteria Examination	40
3.6	Schedule 7A Sub-threshold Criteria	42
3.6.1	Description of the Proposed Development	42
3.6.2	Aspects of the Environment likely to be Significantly Affected	42
3.6.3	Description of any Likely Significant Effects.....	44
3.6.4	Compilation of Paragraphs 1-3	45
3.6.5	Summary of Schedule 7a Criteria Assessment.....	45
4.	CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	46
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	47

1.

INTRODUCTION

MKO has been instructed by Galway County Council (GCC) to prepare an Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report (EIASR) for the construction of an outdoor amenity area (as part of the Outdoor Amenity Enhancement project) at Long Point, Loughrea, Co. Galway.

This Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening exercise was undertaken to determine if an EIA is required for the Proposed Development as set out in the mandatory and discretionary provisions of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) ('the Act') and in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended) ('the Regulations').

Certain projects listed in Schedule 5 (Part 1) of the Regulations require a mandatory EIA due to their potential for significant environmental effects. Other projects, listed in the Schedule 5 (Part 2) of the Regulations, contain threshold levels and for projects that fall below these thresholds it is the competent authority (in this case GCC) to decide if an EIA and the associated Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) is required.

Whether a sub-threshold development should be subject to an EIA is determined by whether the development would be likely to have significant effect on the environment. The Regulations state that the planning authority shall carry out a preliminary examination of, at a minimum, the nature, size, or location of the development. Where the planning authority concludes, based on such preliminary examination, that there is significant and realistic doubt regarding the likelihood of significant environmental effects arising from the proposed works, it shall, by written notice 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.

Significant effects may arise due to the nature of the Proposed Development, its scale or extent, and its location in relation to the characteristics of the receiving area, particularly sensitive environments.

This EIASR will accompany the planning application for the Proposed Development. The planning application for the Proposed Development is also accompanied by the following reports:

- Natura Impact Assessment Report
- Ecological Impact Assessment Report
- Construction Environmental Management Plan
- Civil Engineering Report
- Flood Risk Assessment Report
- Planning Report
- Traffic and Transport Assessment Report
- Landscape Soft Works Report
- Site Investigation Report

The findings of all technical reports prepared as outlined above have been considered in the preparation of this EIASR with all the results and findings from each report taken into account within this EIA Screening. Where applicable, mitigation and the key results of these technical reports and assessments have been presented in this EIASR with a rationale as to how findings have been taken into account when determining the requirement for EIA.

This report documents the methodology employed to complete the EIA screening exercise, having regard to the relevant legislation and guidance documents.

Statement of Authority

The EIASR has been compiled by Eileen Corley and reviewed by Tom Madden and Eoin O'Sullivan all of MKO. Eileen is a Graduate Environmental Scientist who has been working with MKO since September 2023. Eileen graduated from University of Galway in BSc Environmental science where she focused her studies on environmental nature conservation and environmental legislation. Since taking up her position with MKO, Eileen has worked on Environmental Impact Assessment Reports, Construction and Environmental Management Plan Reports and QGIS mapping for a range of projects such as wind energy and wastewater treatment plants.

Tom Madden is an Environmental Scientist with over 4 years' experience in professional environmental consultancies. Tom holds a BSc (Hons) in Environmental Science from the University of Limerick. Tom's key strengths are in compilation of various types of environmental reports such as EIAR Chapters, Construction & Environmental Management Plans, Construction Waste Management Plans. Tom is also proficient in conducting environmental sampling such as groundwater, surface water, noise, and odour. In addition, the determination made by this report has been considered by Eileen Corley in consultation with Michael Watson and Owen Cahill.

Eoin O'Sullivan is Project Director Environment at MKO with over 14 years of experience in the assessment of a wide range of energy and infrastructure related projects and working in the fields of environmental and human health risk assessment, waste management, waste policy and permitting. Eoin has wide experience in the project management of large-scale infrastructural projects and brownfield developments which includes all aspects of geo-environmental and geotechnical investigation. Eoin holds a BSc (Hons) in Environmental Science & Technology and a MSc in Environmental Engineering. Prior to taking up his position with MKO in July 2017, Eoin worked as a Chartered Senior Engineer with CGL in Surrey, UK. Prior to this Eoin worked as a Project Engineer with RPS Consulting Engineers in Belfast. Eoin has wide experience in the project management of large-scale brownfield developments and has routinely undertaken detailed quantitative risk assessment for the protection of controlled waters and ground gas risk assessments. Eoin has also experience in completing PPC Permit Applications and in the preparation of Environmental Impact Assessment Reports for renewable energy projects, quarries and a number of non-hazardous landfill sites and anaerobic digesters for both public and private clients. Eoin's key strengths include project strategy advice for a wide range and scale of projects, project management and liaising with the relevant local authorities, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and statutory consultees as well as coordinating the project teams and sub-contractors. Eoin is a Chartered Member of the Chartered Institute of Water and Environmental Management and Chartered Environmentalist with the Society of Environment.

The listed Environmental Practitioners have a combined experience of nearly 40 years in the areas of EIA and Planning & Environmental Consultancy.

2.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1

Site Location and Description

The Proposed Development is located in the townland of Knockanima, Loughrea, Co. Galway approximately 1.4 km south east of Loughrea Town Centre. The Proposed Development site extends to 2.26 hectares (ha) and the Irish Transverse Mercator (ITM) coordinates for the approximate centre of the site are (X 562370.00) (Y 715177.00). A Site Location and Site Layout map are included in Figure 2-1 and 2-2 below.

The site is bounded to the south, east and west by Lough Rea. To the north of the Proposed Development site is R351 Lake Road. The site is currently made up of public amenity areas, sealed paths and carparks.

The site will be accessed from the existing site entrance via the R351 Lake Road. Prior to the commencement of any construction, the junction at the site entrance will be upgraded.

The topographical survey prepared by Hydro Environmental Ltd states that the shoreline levels at 79.5 to 80 m Ordnance Datum (OD) and rising south-eastward away from the lake edge to 84.5 m OD. The existing Changing area is at 80.8 to 80.9 m OD and the existing carparking area is 80.5 to 81.5m OD.

There are no cultural heritage assets recorded within the proposed site boundary. However, there is one structure, a crannog (GA105-226—), designated on the Sites and Monuments Record approximately 116 m north of the development area. There is another designated crannog (GA105-227—) 219 m south of the Proposed Development.

The Proposed Development site is located within the approximate proximity to the following designated Natura 2000 sites:

- Partial overlap with Lough Rea Special Area of Conservation (SAC) [000304]
- Partial overlap with Lough Rea Special Protection Area (SPA) [0041134]
- 7.84 km northeast of Sonnagh Bog SAC [001913]
- 2.41 km north of the Slieve Aught Mountains SPA [004168]
- 13.01 km southeast of the Rahasane Turlough SAC [000322]
- 20.73 km east of the Galway Bay Complex SAC [000268]
- 27.44 km east of the Inner Galway Bay SPA [004031]

The closest Natural Heritage Area (NHA) is the Slieve Aughty Bog, which is located 7.86 km south from the Proposed Development site.

The Proposed Development site is located within the Galway Bay South East catchment and the Kilcogan_SC_010 sub-catchment.

Lough Rea is located immediately adjacent to the proposed sites western boundary. The Proposed Development site boundary encompasses a small area of Lough Rea. It should be noted that the section Lough Rea that is encompassed within the Proposed Development site boundary is a designated European Site (SAC) [000304] and Lough Rea Special Protection Area (SPA) [004134]

Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) data indicated that the subject site is located outside any flood zones and pluvial flood risk areas. The proposed site is located outside the Annual Exceedence Probability (AEP) Coastal Flood Event and therefore is not considered at risk from Coastal Flooding. The site is also not in vicinity of any tidally influenced area of groundwater flood and is therefore not considered at Risk from groundwater flooding.

The majority of the habitat within the Proposed Development is highly modified and dominated by buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3), amenity grassland (GA2), and scattered trees and parkland (WD5).

There are no Annex I habitats or Annex II plant species within the Proposed Development. However, wet willow ash woodland (WN6) was recorded to the south of the site and conforms to the Annex I-listed habitat of the EU Habitats Directive: Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion*, *Alnion incanae*, *Salicion albae*) [91E0] whilst Lough Rea itself conforms to the Annex I listed habitat hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of *Chara* spp. [3140].

No invasive alien species as listed on the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011 (S.I No 477 of 2011) Part 1 or 2 were recorded within the Proposed Development site.



DRAWING NOTES

ORDNANCE SURVEY ITM CO-ORDINATES: 562460, 715144
OS MAP LICENSE NUMBER: CYALS0379128

© ORDNANCE SURVEY IRELAND / GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND

EXTENT OF SITE OUTLINED IN RED

SITE AREA: 2.26 HA

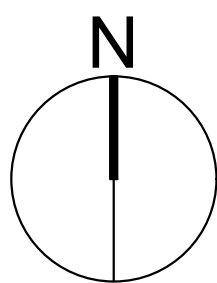
THIS DRAWING IS COPYRIGHT AND IS FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY AND IS NOT TO BE USED FOR CONSTRUCTION PURPOSES.

USE FIGURED DIMENSIONS ONLY. DO NOT SCALE FROM DRAWINGS.

THIS DRAWING SHOULD BE ONLY RELIED UPON FOR THE SPECIFIC PURPOSE THAT IT WAS PREPARED AND SHOULD NOT BE RELIED UP ON FOR CONSTRUCTION PURPOSES. NO IMPLIED OR EXPRESSED WARRANTY IS GIVEN AS TO THE SUITABILITY FOR CONSTRUCTION PURPOSES. HELENA MCELMEEL ARCHITECTS SHALL NOT BE LIABLE FOR ANY LOSS OR DAMAGE OR INJURY CONSEQUENTIAL OR OTHERWISE HOWSOEVER ARISING FOR FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE ABOVE.

Rev	Date	Description	Drawn By	Checked By
0	2024.09.26	ISSUED FOR PLANNING		

PROJECT	LONG POINT OUTDOOR AMENITY ENHANCEMENT PROJECT	DWG. NO.	P(01)01
CLIENT	GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL	REV.	0
DRAWING TITLE	SITE LOCATION MAP		
99014	JULY 2024	1:2500 @ A3	BS
PROJECT NO.	DATE	SCALE	DRAWN BY
			CHECKED BY
			RELEASED



KEY TO SURFACE FINISHES

- AMENITY GRASS, MAINTAINED GRASS / LAWN

WILDFLOWER / BIO-DIVERSE PLANTING

SWALE

EXISTING WOODLAND

PERMEABLE RESIN BOUND GRAVEL FOOTPATHS:
18 mm RESIN BOUND FINISH ON POROUS ASPHALT
BINDER COURSE ON SUB-BASE

SELECTED PERMEABLE PAVING, SUITABLE FOR
VEHICLES TO FACILITATE EMERGENCY ACCESS

NATURAL STONE PLANTING BEDS - POLLINATOR
FRIENDLY PERENNIAL & GRASS PLANTING

COMPOSITE / RECONSTITUTED DECKING

SAND

EXISTING NATURAL BEACH AREA

PEDESTRIAN / CYCLE SHARED SURFACE

COURTESY CROSSING SUITABLE FOR PERMANENT
VEHICULAR TRAFFIC

BLISTERED TACTILE PAVING - BUFF COLOURED

BLISTERED TACTILE PAVING - RED COLOURED

TARMACADAM ROAD FINISH
- PICNIC BENCH / TABLE - WITH AGE FRIENDLY SEATING

PICNIC BENCH TABLE - WITH AGE FRIENDLY SEATING
AND WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE SPACE

BENCH - WITH AGE FRIENDLY SEATING

CUSTOM BENCH

WASTE BIN

METAL SPHERICAL BOLLARD

CONTACTLESS WATER STATION

EXISTING LEVELS

PROPOSED LEVELS

PARKING SPACE

AGE FRIENDLY PARKING SPACE

ACCESSIBLE PARKING SPACE

ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING PARKING SPACE

BICYCLE STANDS

NATIVE TREE CLUSTERS

AVENUE TREE PLANTING

PROPOSED LIGHTING

DRAWING NOTES

EXTENT OF SITE: OUTLINED IN RED
SITE AREA: 2.26 HA
AREA OF EXISTING LIFEGUARD STATION TO BE DEMOLISHED: 9 SQ.M
AREA OF EXISTING CHANGING SHELTER TO BE DEMOLISHED: 28 SQ.M
AREA OF EXISTING STORAGE/ PLANT TO BE ALTERED: 92.5 SQ.M
AREA OF PROPOSED CHANGING/WCS: 86 SQ.M
AREA OF PROPOSED LIFEGUARD STATION: 16.2 SQ.M
151 NO. PARKING SPACES:
STANDARD: 130 NO.
ACCESSIBLE: 8 NO.
AGE FRIENDLY: 7 NO.
EV: 6 NO.

THIS DRAWING IS COPYRIGHT AND IS FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY AND IS NOT TO BE USED FOR CONSTRUCTION PURPOSES.
USE FIGURED DIMENSIONS ONLY. DO NOT SCALE FROM DRAWINGS.

THIS DRAWING SHOULD BE ONLY RELIED UPON FOR THE SPECIFIC PURPOSE THAT IT WAS PREPARED AND SHOULD NOT BE RELIED
UP ON FOR CONSTRUCTION PURPOSES. NO IMPLIED OR EXPRESSED WARRANTY IS GIVEN AS TO THE SUITABILITY FOR
CONSTRUCTION PURPOSES. HELENA MCELMEEL ARCHITECTS SHALL NOT BE LIABLE FOR ANY LOSS OR DAMAGE OR INJURY
CONSEQUENTIAL OR OTHERWISE HOWSOEVER ARISING FOR FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE ABOVE.

REFER TO CIVIL ENGINEERS DRAWINGS AND SW REPORT FOR DETAILS OF PROPOSED DRAINAGE AND SEWAGE DETAILS.
REFER TO TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT ASSESSMENT AND ROAD SAFETY AUDIT FOR DETAILS OF PROPOSED UPGRADES TO EXISTING
VEHICULAR ACCESS AND PROPOSED NEW VEHICULAR, CYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN AMENITIES.

REFER TO SOFT LANDSCAPING DESIGN REPORT FOR DETAILS OF SOFT LANDSCAPING PROPOSALS.
REFER TO SITE LIGHTING LAYOUT AND SITE LIGHTING OVERVIEW FOR DETAILS OF PROPOSED EXTERNAL LIGHTING.

0	2024.09.24	ISSUED FOR PLANNING			
Rev	Date	Description		Drawn By	Checked By

PROJECT	LONG POINT OUTDOOR AMENITY ENHANCEMENT PROJECT	DWG. NO.	
CLIENT	GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL		P(01)03
DRAWING TITLE	PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT PLAN	REV.	0
99014	JULY 2024	1:500 @ A1	BS
PROJECT NO.	DATE	SCALE	DRAWN BY
			CHECKED BY
			RELEASED

HELENA MCELMEEL
ARCHITECTS

T. +353 91 539023 | E. INFO@MCELMEEL.IE | DOCKGATE HOUSE, MERCHANT'S ROAD, GALWAY



2.2

The Proposed Development

The Proposed Development is as follows:

- Repair works comprising:
 - Repair of the existing pier surfaces.
 - Repair of the existing slipway to provide safe launching point for kayaks and stand-up paddle boards.
- Demolition of an existing changing shelter to facilitate passive surveillance and views of Lough Rea.
- Alteration to existing toilet and shower building to provide storage, plant, and a changing places toilet (accessible toilet, shower and changing facility) (93 m²).
- Provision of new changing, toilet and shower facilities in a single storey building (86 m²) including sheltered outdoor shower changing area.
- Provision of a lifeguard station building (16 m²).
- Provision of a circular viewing deck to the south of the existing pier.
- Provision of a totem sign extending to approximately four metres in height.
- Alteration to existing beach area and provision of a deck, steps and ramp to water's edge and beach area for access for all to the water.
- Provision of a shared active travel route along the sites eastern boundary adjacent to the Lake Road (R351) and the provision of designated bicycle parking spaces.
- Removal of 2 no. existing vehicular access points and alterations and junction upgrade works to the existing central access point, and provision of internal pedestrian crossings.
- Reconfiguration of and upgrades to the existing car parking areas to provide increased parking provision and to accommodate age-friendly and set down spaces and trading bays, and the provision of 1 no. new car parking area which includes EV charging and accessible parking spaces.
- Provision of hard and soft site landscaping works, sustainable drainage system (SuDS) measures, pumping and water stations, all connections, public lighting, PV panels at roof level and site services.
- All ancillary services and associated site development works.

2.3

Construction Methodology

The construction phase of the Proposed Development is anticipated to last for approximately 30 months. Section 2.4 of the accompanying Construction and Environmental Plan (CEMP), prepared by MKO, outlines the typical construction programme of the Proposed Development.

The key schedule of works will be typical of amenity developments and would be as follows:

- Site Establishment/Set-up
- Construction Compound
- Demolition Works
- Site Excavation
- Services and Utilities
- Drainage Works
- Changing Area, Bathrooms and Lifeguard Station Building
- Circular Viewing Deck
- Deck/Steps and Ramp
- Site Entrance
- Repair Works
- Landscaping Works

2.3.1

Proposed works at the Existing Changing Area

Site Establishment/Set-up

The subject site will be accessed from the existing site entrance via the R351 Lake Road. Prior to the commencement of any construction, the working area will be fenced off using heras panels or appropriate fencing. In addition, the junction at the site entrance will be upgraded. Methodology for the proposed junction upgrade works is detailed below.

It should be noted that all works will be undertaken within the confines of the site. A controlled access point in the form of the site entrance will be kept locked outside of normal working hours. Due to the nature of the works, appropriate signage will be provided at the site to alert pedestrians to the construction activities and related traffic at the site. The contractor will be required to undertake the following.

- Operate a Site Induction Process for all site staff.
- Ensure all site staff shall have current 'Safe Pass' cards.
- Maintain Site Security staff at all times.
- Install access security in the form of gates for staff.

The existing car park areas will be utilised by construction workers within the site during the construction phase. There will be no parking permitted for any vehicles associated with the project on the public road during the construction phase of the development unless agreed with Galway County Council.

Construction Compound

A construction compound will be established within the site boundary. The exact location of the site compound will be established by the contractor and will be located a minimum of 50 m from any watercourses or waterbodies. A layer of well graded granular material will be spread and lightly compacted to provide a hardstanding area. Portable cabin structures will be used to provide temporary site offices. Power will be provided using a diesel or petrol driven generator. The construction compound will also be used as a storage and lay down area for the various construction materials as required.

The compound will typically be constructed as follows:

- The area to be used as the compound will be marked out at the corners using ranging rods or timber posts;
- A layer of well graded granular material will be spread and lightly compacted to provide a hard area for site offices and storage containers;
- Areas within the compound will be constructed as site track and used as vehicle hardstandings during deliveries and for parking;
- If necessary, the compound will be temporarily fenced and secured with locked gates, although fencing would only be utilised where significant risk of danger to third parties or vandalism is envisaged;
- During the construction phase, a self-contained port-a-loo with an integrated waste holding tank will be used on site for toilet facilities. This will be maintained by the providing contractor on a regular basis and will be removed from the site on completion of the construction phase;
- A dedicated waste storage area will be located within the temporary construction compound.

Demolition Works

The works entail the demolition of the existing changing area. The demolition/decommissioning works which will be carried out at the existing changing area will be carried out using the following methodology:

- Pre-check of the site for any hazards or existing services. These checks will be carried out by a competent person(s).
- An inventory of the waste types that will be generated by the demolition works will be carried out.
- Demolition will be completed by trained personnel using appropriate equipment and tools and a mechanical excavator if required.
- The majority of the waste generated during the demolition and decommissioning will be segregated and sent by an authorised waste collector to an authorised waste recovery facility.

Site Excavation

Excavations will be required around the site as the Proposed Development progresses, particularly where it is proposed to construct a lifeguard station building and changing rooms. In addition, minor excavations will also be required for the shared active travel route, junction upgrade works, car parking areas and site services. While these works occur, the following will apply:

- The area where excavations are planned will be surveyed and all existing services will be identified.
- All relevant bodies i.e., ESB, Gas Networks Ireland, Eir, Galway County Council etc., will be contacted and all drawings for all existing services sought.
- All plant operators and general operatives will be inducted and informed as to the location of any services.
- A tracked 360-degree excavator will be used for initial excavations, and a dumper will be used to move the excavated materials to the temporary stockpile location within the site.
- Excavated material will be removed from the site for appropriate reuse or disposal elsewhere. Some excavated material will be reused on the site for backfill of excavations.
- Stockpiling of soil during construction, should it be required, will take place in designated areas within the site boundary as far away from any watercourses or waterbodies as is practically possible.
- If ground water is encountered during excavations, waters will be pumped from excavation and discharged through a pipe with an attached silt bag and onto an area of overland vegetation within the site boundary. Discharge to ground will be via a silt bag which will filter any remaining sediment from the pumped water.
- When practically possible, excavation depths and volumes will be kept to a minimum.

Services and Utilities

The proposed storm water drainage system has been designed to cater for all surface water runoff from all hard surfaces within the Proposed Development. As part of the Proposed Development, there will be an increase in impermeable surfaces (permeable paving), and therefore, increased surface water drainage. The proposed drainage system for runoff includes Stormbreaker Water Attenuation, Infiltration and soakaway systems which will collect the stormwater from the proposed buildings, carparks and roads.

Foul effluent for the current and Proposed Development is detailed below.

Drainage Works

Storm/Surface Water Drainage

A design of the Storm/surface Water Drainage network has been prepared for the Proposed Development by S. Hanniffy & Associates Consulting Engineers. The below information is based on their findings and is provided here for context.

Currently, a SuDS has been designed in order to deal with the storm/surface water from the existing/Proposed Development.

It is proposed to install 3 No. Stormbreaker Water Attenuation, Infiltration and Soakaway systems to deal with the stormwater from the proposed buildings, carparks and roads as shown on Drawing No. 24143-01 prepared by S.Hanniffy & Associates Consulting Engineers. The storm/surface water from the 2 No. proposed buildings, Carpark C and the road will discharge to soakaway No. 1 which has a capacity of 149m³. The stormwater from Carpark A will discharge to Soakaway No. 2 which has a capacity of 98.4m³. The stormwater from Carpark B will discharge to Soakaway No. 3 which has a capacity of 136.90m³.

The surface water sewers and the Stormbreaker Soakaways were designed to be as shallow as possible to negate the effect of flooding within the area. Due to these shallow depths, some of the storm water sewers will be surrounded with concrete, as shown on Drawing No. 24143-02 prepared by S.Hanniffy & Associates Consulting Engineers.

It is proposed to use permeable paving to deal with stormwater in the proposed quayside area, as shown on drawing No. 24143-01 prepared by S.Hanniffy & Associates Consulting Engineers. The use of Permeable Paving is a SuDs based permeable system which is designed to cater for the stormwater runoff from the quayside area and discharge it into the sub-base and ground below this area. There is no requirement for a bypass separator in this area, as it is primarily for pedestrian use. The paths within the development will be finished with permeable resin bound gravel, which is self-draining.

Bypass Inceptor & Silt Traps

The impervious areas of the proposed roofs, carpark and roadway will be discharged through 3 No. Kingspan Klargestor Bypass Separators with silt traps prior to final discharge to the 3 No. Stormbreaker Soakaway systems. It is proposed to install a Kingspan Klargestor Bypass interceptor model NSBP004 (or similar) on the storm water sewer prior to final discharge to the Stormbreaker Soakaway 2 as shown on drawing No. 24143-01 prepared by S.Hanniffy & Associates Consulting Engineers. The Kingspan Klargestor Bypass Separators have been designed to cater for the stormwater discharge from the entire development.

Foul Water Treatment

The existing foul water system for the current changing facilities is discharged to a foul sewer adjacent to the changing rooms and is pumped to an existing public sewer within the public road to the north of the site. It is proposed to install a new foul sewer system around the new storage/plant building and changing room/WC which will discharge to the existing pump station and then to the existing public sewer to the north of the site.

Changing Area, Bathrooms and Lifeguard Station Building

The proposed changing area, bathrooms and lifeguard station building are anticipated to be constructed by the following methodology:

- The area where excavations and foundations are to be installed will be surveyed and all existing services will be identified.

- The area in which the changing area will be constructed will be marked out using ranging rods or wooden posts and the overburden stripped and removed to nearby storage area for later use in landscaping.
- All plant operators and general operatives will be inducted and informed as to the location of any services.
- A tracked 360-degree excavator or similar will be used to excavate the area down to a competent stratum as approved by the Design Engineer.
- Foundations will be shuttered and cast with reinforced concrete as per the Design Engineer's specification.
- The precast elements, block/brick-work walls will be built up from the foundation including a Damp Proof Course (DPC).
- The block/brick-work will then be raised to wall plate level and internal partition walls formed. Scaffold will be erected around the outside of the buildings for these works.
- New windows and doors, electrics, plumbing (as applicable) and all other building components and services will be installed in as timely a manner as is possible.
- The buildings will be inspected and certified by the project design engineer at the appropriate stages of construction.
- It is also anticipated that solar PV panels will be installed on the roof of the changing area/bathroom in the future.

Circular Viewing Deck

There is a requirement for in-lake works to construct the circular viewing deck which will be located above the lake itself, supported by pylons. The circular viewing deck will be formed in composite decking on frame as per drawing no. P(01) 03 By Helena McElmeel Architects. The following methodology will be implemented to install the proposed viewing deck:

- Prior to installing the support pylons, the works area will be temporarily dammed (cofferdam) with sandbags and will completely surround the works area.
- A dry works area will be created within the cofferdams. This will be created by pumping water from within the works area.
- A submersible pump will be used to pump water out of the works area, creating a dry working area, and will be pumped to a discharge point, a minimum of 30 m from any waterbody and within the main construction site. It will pass through a silt bag before discharge to ground.
- The pylons will then be installed as per the design by pile driving them to an appropriate depth.
- The frames for the composite decking will then be installed on the pylons. Composite decking will then be secured to the frame structure.
- All works will be checked by an appropriately qualified engineer prior to completion.
- A silt curtain will be installed outside the cofferdam works area to prevent any silt that may be disturbed as a result of the works from being dispersed to the lake.

Deck/Steps & Ramp

An accessible deck/steps will be installed to improve access to the water. The proposed accessible deck/steps and other in-lake works are anticipated to be constructed using the following methodology:

- Works will be carried out in the dry to avoid siltation of the Lough Rea and downstream watercourses.
- The areas within Lough Rea where works are required will be temporarily dammed (coffer dam) with sandbags and will completely surround the work area. A silt curtain will also be installed if deemed necessary.

- No batching of wet-cement products will occur on site. Pre-cast elements for culverts and concrete works will be used.
- Prior to the installation of the precast elements, minor excavation and grading works will be carried out to achieve the appropriate installation levels.
- A submersible pump will be used to pump water out of the works area, creating a dry working area, and will be pumped to a discharge point, a minimum of 30 m from any waterbody and within the Proposed Development site. It will pass through a silt bag before discharge to ground.
- Prior to pumping, electrofishing should be carried out within the works area under licence from the NPWS by a qualified ecologist to remove any fisheries and move them into Lough Rea.
- Machinery will not enter the water.
- Once works within these areas are complete, the sandbags will be removed to allow water from the lake back into the area.
- All in-lake works will be carried out according to Inland Fisheries Ireland (2016) *Guidelines on Protection of Fisheries During Construction Works in and Adjacent to Waters*.
- The deck/steps and ramp and other in-lake works should be carried out during the period of July 1st to September 30th to minimise potential adverse impacts to fisheries, in line with Inland Fisheries Ireland (2016) *Guidelines on Protection of Fisheries During Construction Works in and Adjacent to Waters*.

Solar Photovoltaic Panels Installation

Photovoltaic (PV) panels will be installed on the roof of the proposed changing area/bathrooms. The preference for the mounting system will be via a non-penetrative means where possible. The panels will then be fixed at the same pitch as the existing roof.

Site Entrance

Upgrade to Existing Parking Areas, Pedestrian Crossing, Junction Upgrade Works & Totem Sign

The existing parking areas will be upgraded to accommodate age-friendly and set down spaces alongside the provision of 2 no. new car parking areas inclusive of EV charging and accessible parking spaces and designated bicycle parking spaces. Junction upgrade works are also proposed for the site. At present the site is accessed by three (3) access junctions. It is proposed to decommission two (2) of these access junctions and propose one (1) access junction. Additionally, internal pedestrian crossings are also proposed for this Proposed Development site alongside a totem sign (approximately 4 m in height).

The proposed car parking areas and other areas of tarmac hardstanding are anticipated to be constructed using the following methodology:

- The area where excavations and areas of hardstanding are to be installed will be surveyed.
- The area of the car parking and other hardstanding areas will be marked out and the soil and overburden stripped and removed to a nearby storage area for layer use in landscaping
- A tracked 360-degree excavator or similar will be used to excavate the area down to a competent stratum as approved by the Design Engineer.
- A layer of permeable aggregate in the form of clause 804 gravel or crushed concrete will then be installed. This layer will be compacted and checked for correct levels.
- At this stage the tarmac will be applied. The tarmac will also be compacted.

Shared Active Travel Route

The shared active travel route is anticipated to be constructed as follows:

- All plant operators and general operatives will be inducted and informed as to the location of any services.
- The excavation will take place to locate any existing services by use of a small excavator.
- Following this, the resurfacing/removal of the excavated materials will be loaded and transported to an appropriately licensed waste facility.
- A tracked 360-degree excavator or similar will be used to excavate the area down to the appropriate depth.
- A wrapped geotextile will be laid down. This will help suppress weed growth, minimise sinking, strengthen the base and prevent the escape of fines.
- A layer of aggregate material and tarmac will be installed to provide a base for the shared active travel route.

Repair Works

The existing pier surfaces and slipway will be repaired according to the engineers specifications. The slipway is to be repaired to provide a safe launching point for kayaks and stand up paddle boards. The existing pier surfaces and slipway repair works will be installed in line with the proposed in-lake works as is seen above.

Landscaping Works

Prior to the completion of works on the site, landscaping works will be carried out. These works will involve the use of plant and machinery in order to carry out tasks such as earth moving. Material will only be imported where it is required.

A Landscape Soft Works Report has been prepared by Cooney McDowall Design Studio Ltd. The proposed landscape works will involve the following:

- Native Wildflower Zones/Reduced Mowing Areas
- Pollinator-friendly perennial and grass planting (Natural Stone Planting Beds)
- Woodland Tree Clusters
- Avenue Tree planting
- Swale Planting
- Amenity Grass

3. EIA SCREENING METHODOLOGY

3.1 Legislative Context

EIA requirements derive from Council Directive 85/337/EEC ((as amended) by Directives 97/11/EC, 2003/35/EC and 2009/31/EC) and as codified and replaced by Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and the Council on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment and (as amended) in turn by Directive 2014/52/EU.

The consolidated European Union Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (the 'EIA Directive'), was transposed into Irish planning legislation by the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) . The EIA Directive w(as amended) by Directive 2014/52/EU (the 'amended Directive'), which has been transposed into Irish law with the European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 (S.I. No. 296 of 2018) on the 1st of January 2019, which were effectively an updating of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

The legislation requires screening to be undertaken to determine whether or not specified public or private developments are likely to have significant effects on the environment and, as such, require an EIA to be carried out prior to a decision on a development consent application being made. The European Commission (2017) have published a Guidance on Screening document (Directive 2011/92/EU (as amended) 2014/52/EU) which summarises the need for an EIA based on specific measures and/or limits, according to predefined criteria such as characteristics of projects, the locations of projects and the type and characteristics of the potential impact as set out in Annex III of the amended Directive.

3.2 Methodology and Guidance

Screening the Proposed Development is a process used to establish whether an EIA is required to be undertaken. There are a number of steps in the screening process.

The mandatory requirement for an EIA is generally based on certain project categories as set out in Annex I and II of the amended EIA Directive. This identifies certain types and scales of development, generally based on thresholds of scale, for which EIA is mandatory. There is sometimes a requirement for EIA 'sub-threshold' developments to undergo a screening exercise to assess whether the Proposed Development requires the preparation of an EIAR.

A methodology was developed to formally screen the Proposed Development, which was based on *Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development* (EPA, 2003) and the 2017 guidance issued by the European Commission. The screening exercise is divided into a section on Mandatory EIA and another on Sub-threshold or Discretionary EIA. In each section a screening assessment has been undertaken which examines the requirement for an EIA according to the criteria set out in the relevant legislation. The rationale behind the responses within the matrix is provided at the end of each section.

Summary of guidance documents used:

- Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development (EPA, 2003)
- European Commission Guidance on the preparation of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EC, 2017)
- European Commission Guidance on Screening (EC, 2017)

- Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessments (2018)
- Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) Practice Note – Environmental Impact Assessment Screening (2021)
- Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (2022)

3.3

Mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment

Section 172 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) provides the legislative basis for mandatory EIA. It states the following:

“An environmental impact assessment shall be carried out by a planning authority or the Board, as the case may be, in respect of an application for consent for Proposed Development where either:

1. 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 exceed 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 exceed 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

- 2.*
 - (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 exceed the relevant quantity, area or other limit specified in that Part, and*
 - (ii) it is concluded, determined, or decided, as the case may be,*
 - I. 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),*
 - II. by the Board, in exercise of the powers conferred on it by this Act or those regulations,*
 - III. by a local authority in exercise of the powers conferred on it by Regulation 120 of those regulations,*
 - IV. by a State authority, in exercise of the powers conferred on it by regulation 123A of those regulations,*
 - V. in accordance with section 13A of the Foreshore Act, by the appropriate Minister (within the meaning of that Act), or*
 - VI. 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 effect on the environment.*

Further to the above, Schedule 5 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) sets out a number of classes and scales of development that require EIA.

With regards to the Proposed Development, the below classes within the provisions of Schedule 5 are relevant to the Proposed Development.

3.3.1 Schedule 5, Part 2

The following classes of development may be relevant to the Proposed Development with regard to EIA:

- *Class 10 (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.*

And also (possibly):

- *Class 15 any sub-threshold project in Schedule 5 Part 2 which does not exceed a quantity, area or other limit specified, but would be likely to have a significant effect on the environment.*

The Proposed Development does not propose an area greater than 10 hectares (built up area) or 20 hectares (elsewhere) (being 2.26 hectares) Therefore, the Proposed Development is not subject to a mandatory EIA under Schedule 5, Part 2, Class 10 (iv).

However, the Proposed Development is considered under the provisions of Class 15 for sub-threshold developments; an evaluation of the Schedule 7 criteria is provided in Section 3.5 below to further consider if the development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

The information is provided in the Sections that follow.

3.4 Sub-Threshold Assessment

Section 172 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) also sets out the basis for the requirement of an EIA for developments which may not be of a scale included in Schedule 5 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (as amended). This allows a consenting authority to carry out an EIA where it is of the opinion that the Proposed Development is likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

In this context, the consideration of ‘significant effect’ should not be determined by reference to size or scale only, and the nature and location of a project must also be taken into account.

Class 15 of Part 2 under Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) provides for EIA for developments which are under the sub-threshold, where the Proposed Development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment. This states the following:

“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.”

The Proposed Development is a project which falls under a class within Schedule 5 however is considered sub-threshold as the area of the site is 2.26 hectares in area rather than 10 hectares (built up area) or 20 hectares (elsewhere).

The 1997 amending Directive (97/11/EC) introduced guidance for Member States in terms of deciding whether or not a development is likely to have ‘significant effects on the environment’. This was codified and replaced by Directive 2011/92/EU (*EIA Directive*) and then Directive 2014/52/EU

(*amended Directive*) which has been transposed into Irish law with the European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 (S.I. No. 296 of 2018) on 1st of January 2019 which was effectively an updating of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

The Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) are grouped under three headings as follows:

- 1) Characteristics of the Proposed Development
- 2) Location of Proposed Development
- 3) Types and characteristics of potential impacts

Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), sets out the information to be provided by the applicant or developer for the purposes of screening sub-threshold development for an EIA.

- 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*

Each of the above groupings for Schedule 7 and 7A includes a number of criteria for consideration. The assessment on whether the Proposed Development would be likely to have significant impacts on the environment is based on the overall consideration of all criteria and requires clear and rational judgment. The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) Guidance Document *Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-Threshold Development* (2003) states that:

“Those responsible for making the decision must exercise their best professional judgment, taking account of considerations such as the nature and size of the Proposed Development, the environmental sensitivity of the area and the nature of the potential effects of the development. In general, it is not intended that special studies or technical evaluations will be necessary for the purpose of making a decision.”

The Schedule 7 and 7A criteria are examined in more detail in the following subsections. The screening questions are based on the criteria listed under each grouped heading for each Schedule as set out in the Regulations.

In addition, the checklist of criteria set out in the European Commission document *Guidance on Screening* (2017) has been used to determine if the Proposed Development would be likely to have significant impacts on the environment.

The consideration of this criteria is captured within the sections that follow.

3.5 Schedule 7 Criteria

Class 15 of Schedule 5, Part 2 of the Regulations sets out a requirement for an EIA to be undertaken for a project which is deemed to be subthreshold in accordance with the thresholds set out in that Part but would be likely to have significant impacts on the environment having regards to the criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the Regulations. In this section, the Proposed Development is examined considering the scale, location, and nature of the Proposed Development in accordance with the Schedule 7 criteria.

3.5.1 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

The nature, scale and characteristics of the Proposed Development are considered to determine if it would be likely to have significant impacts on the environment in the sections below in accordance with Schedule 7 of the regulations.

3.5.1.1 Size and Design of the Whole Proposed Development

The Proposed Development will be carried out as part of the Outdoor Amenity Enhancement project including repair works, provision of new changing rooms, bathrooms, lifeguard station building, upgrades to the existing car park, and all associated site development works on a 2.26 hectare site. The assessment for an EIA under the appropriate threshold for amenity developments in such a setting in Section 3.3 above demonstrates that the project is below the thresholds set in the Regulations.

The construction phase of the development along with the final constructed development (in its operational phase) will essentially be confined to the extent of the 2.26 hectare site.

The Proposed Development involves the creation of an inclusive and universally accessible public space has formed one of the underpinning drivers for the Proposed Development. This has been achieved through various design interventions that incorporate the principles of universal design. There are 8 no. accessible parking spaces and 7 no. age-friendly parking spaces. The picnic benches use age friendly seating, and 4 no. picnic benches are also configured to have a wheelchair accessible space. The Proposed Development also includes an accessible deck and ramp to enable access for all to the water's edge. This aligns with the universal design policies as set out in the *Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028* (GCDP) including **PDU 1** states that:

“It is a policy objective of the Planning Authority Council to promote Universal Design and ensure that all public buildings, public open spaces, recreational and amenity areas are accessible for people with disabilities.”

The proposed enhancement works at Long Point also aligns with the need to create an age-friendly society in which people of all ages can live active and healthy lives. In particular, the Proposed Development conforms with policy objective **PA 2** which aims to:

“To support where appropriate, communities and relevant stakeholders to achieve accessible and age-friendly amenities and facilities in communities across the County.”

Additionally, the Proposed Development falls within the functional area of Galway County Council and therefore, the policies and provisions of the GCDP apply to the Proposed Development. Key Policies within the GCDP that relate to the Proposed Development are outlined as follows:

- **CGR 9 Delivering Improved Public Realm:** Provide for a high-quality public realm and public spaces in towns and villages by promoting quality design that accommodates creative patterns of use having regard to the physical, cultural, and social identities of individual settlements.
- **TOU 2 Key Economic Pillars:** To promote and facilitate tourism as an economic pillar of the County's economy and to support the provision of appropriate visitor attractions and improvement in public spaces to promote attractive and vibrant town centres as key places for tourists
- **CT 1 Tourism Resource:** To protect beaches, and bathing areas as valuable local amenities and as a tourism resource and support the maintenance, protection and improvement of access to these amenities.
- **CT 2 Water Sports:** To encourage the development of coastal tourism in areas such as water-sports and water-related activities and events subject to normal planning and environmental criteria.
- **CT3 Tourism Development:** To support proposals for tourism development in coastal areas where it can be demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the amenities of the area, the integrity of the natural, environment or the economic value of the County's coastline and beaches.
- **CT 4 Blue Flags:** To continue to work with An Taisce, the local community and other relevant stakeholders to retain and increase the number of Blue Flag awards in the County.
- **LWT 1 Lakeland and Waterways Tourism:** To support the development of tourism activities in lakeland areas and waterways subject to Normal Planning and environmental criteria. All Proposed Developments shall be in accordance with the Water Framework Directive and all relevant EU Directives.
- **PDU 1 Universal Design Approach:** It is a policy objective of the Planning Authority Council to promote Universal Design and ensure that all public buildings, public open spaces, recreational and amenity areas are accessible for people with disabilities.
- **SRA 2 Promote Public Access to Natural Amenities:** Recognize the role played by natural amenities as a major resource for visitors and local people and support, protect and promote public access to natural amenities that have been traditionally used for outdoor recreation (water-based facilities, recreational activities, and marinas).

It is therefore, considered that the Proposed Development design is appropriate in the context of this site.

3.5.1.2 Cumulation with Other Existing and Permitted Developments

An examination of whether the Proposed Development would be likely to have significant impacts on the environment through cumulation with other existing developments is considered in this section. The National Planning Application Database was consulted for granted planning applications, of which there have been no recent planning applications made within the vicinity of the subject site.

The majority of granted or pending planning applications within the vicinity of the Proposed Development site relate to the construction of or amendments to one-off houses. A list of all granted or pending planning applications in the surrounding area are listed in the accompanying Planning Report (PR) prepared by MKO and the relevant projects identified in Loughrea Galway from the last seven (7) years are listed below:

- Extension of Duration on Pl. Ref. 16/297 for the construction of a serviced dwellinghouse and wastewater treatment system (gross floor space 186.30 m²) (pl ref: 21908).
- Permission for the blocking up of an existing agricultural entrance and the construction of a replacement agricultural entrance, internal roadway and concrete bund for the temporary storage and disposal of animal waste(pl ref: 1966).
- Permission for 1) Changes to elevations including door & window styles, material finishes, widening of existing openings, and changes to doors & windows previously granted under Pl. Ref. No's 00/1211 & 08/834. 2) Changes to the internal layout, 3)

- Demolition of the existing chimney stack and internal wall on the ground floor and demolition of existing internal wall at first floor level, 4) Construction of a new chimney stack, 5) Construction of 2 x no. window seat extensions to the front and all associated services. Gross floor space of proposed works 4.12sqm (pl ref: 171343).
- Retention permission for the construction of a two storey extension to the rear of existing dwellinghouse and all associated site services (gross floor space 35sqm) (pl ref: 16438).
- Permission for the construction of a serviced dwellinghouse and wastewater treatment system (gross floor space 186.30 m²) (pl ref: 16297).

The Proposed Development has been assessed and designed for:

- Minimising traffic impacts (Traffic and Transport Assessment)
- Managing drainage, wastewater and storm water (Civil Report, Flood Risk Assessment Report and CEMP)
- Environmental impacts and mitigation measures outlined in the CEMP and NIS.
- Minimising Ecological impacts (EcIA)

The findings of these reports in terms of cumulation of the Proposed Development with existing developments and whether it would be likely to have significant impacts on the environment are summarised as follows.

The accompanying CEMP prepared by MKO provides detail on the minimum proposed traffic management measures (Section 3.4). In general, the impact of the construction period will be temporary in nature, but more significant than the operational stage of the Proposed Development. This plan will be prepared in consultation Galway City Council and submitted for approval in order to agree on traffic management and monitoring measures which are outlined in Section 3.6.2 below.

The CEMP Report has proposed that a storm/surface water will be managed by a SuDS. Additionally, foul water will be managed by a new foul sewer system around the new storage/plant building and changing room/WC which will then discharge to the existing pump station and then to the existing public sewer north of the site.

The CEMP Report has proposed that both storm/surface water and foul water will be managed and that there is no off-site environmental impact caused by overland storm water flows. A variety of mitigation measures are proposed in section 3.1.2 and 3.6.2 in relation to surface and foul water management. In addition, the following documents and guidelines shall be implemented in the contractors CEMP:

- CIRIA C532: *Control of Water Pollution from Construction Sites, Guidance for Consultants and Contractors* (Masters-Shalliams et al.,2010)
- Inland Fisheries Ireland (2016) *Guidelines on Protection of Fisheries During Construction Works in and Adjacent to Waters*
- Inland Fisheries Ireland (2016) *Guidelines on Protection of Fisheries During Construction Works in and Adjacent to Waters*

The Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA), prepared by Alan Lipscombe assesses the impact the Proposed Development will have on the existing surrounding road network. The TTA also assesses the Proposed Development with regard to potential cumulative impacts on the existing road network.

Based on traffic count survey data estimates of future traffic volumes on the surrounding road network were made for the proposed opening year of 2025, and the design year of 2040, based on TII growth rates revised in 2021. The number of trips likely to access the site during peak hours was determined based on observations made at the existing Long Point facility, taking account of the potential of the proposed enhancements to generate a substantial increase in visitor numbers.

Highway capacity tests undertaken for the single access junction proposed off the R351 show that the junction is forecast to operate well within capacity up to and beyond the future year of 2040, with the Long Point Outdoor Amenity Enhancement Project in place. The site is accessible by sustainable modes of travel, which will be enhanced with the implementation of the proposed shared pedestrian/cycle active travel route along the eastern boundary of the site, and the introduction of 36 secure bicycle parking bays. From this assessment, the Proposed Development will be adequately accommodated by the existing environment with the implementation of the proposed improved junction to serve the Long Point facility.

The NIS findings in terms of a cumulation of the proposed works with existing developments and whether it would be likely to have significant impact on the environment are summarised as follows:

Based on the assessment provided in the preceding sections, it is concluded that, the Proposed Development will not result in any residual adverse effects on any of the European Sites, their integrity or their conservation objectives when considered on its own. There is therefore no potential for the Proposed Development to contribute to any cumulative adverse effects on any European Site when considered in-combination with other plans and projects.

The NIS summarises where the potential for any adverse effect on any European Site has been identified, the pathway by which any such effect may occur has been robustly blocked through the use of avoidance, appropriate design and mitigation measures as set out within the NIS and its appendices. The measures ensure that the construction and operation of the Proposed Development does not adversely affect the integrity of European sites. Therefore, it can be objectively concluded that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site'

The EcIA stated that potential residual impacts on ecological receptors will not be significant and no potential for the Proposed Development to contribute to any cumulative impacts on biodiversity when considered in combination with other plans and projects was identified. Provided that the Proposed Development is constructed and operated in accordance with the design described within this application, significant effects on biodiversity are not anticipated at any geographic scale.

In the review of the projects that was undertaken, no connection that could potentially result in additional or cumulative impacts was identified. Neither was any potential for different (new) impacts resulting from the combination of the various projects and plans in association with the Proposed Development. Taking into consideration the reported residual impacts from other plans and projects in the area and the predicted impacts with the current proposal, no residual cumulative impacts have been identified with regard to the biodiversity, flora, and fauna of the existing environment.

The Flood Risk Assessment Report (FRA) prepared by Hydro Environmental Ltd and CFRAM data indicated that the subject site is located outside any flood zones and pluvial flood risk areas. The proposed site is located outside the AEP Coastal Flood Event and therefore is not considered at risk from Coastal Flooding. The site is also not in vicinity of any tidally influenced area of groundwater flood and is therefore not considered at Risk from Groundwater flooding.

The report concluded that a flood risk justification test is not required for the Proposed Development as the proposed changing room building and plant room are not located in the high risk Flood Zone A and the development is a mix of water compatible or less vulnerable development suitable for Flood Risk Zones B and A respectively, and that the Proposed Development satisfies the requirements of the Flood Risk Management planning guidelines (2009) and includes for potential future climate change impacts in respect to the Lough rea lake levels.

Based on the above assessments provided by the relevant accompanying reports, it is unlikely that there will be cumulative impacts with other existing and/or permitted developments associated with the construction and operation of the Proposed Development.

3.5.1.3 Nature of any Associated Demolition Works

The Proposed Development will entail the demolition of an existing changing area. The existing changing area is located in the west corner of the site.

A CEMP has been prepared by MKO. The CEMP states that the demolition waste will reuse materials where possible, and the careful extraction of materials will be undertaken to ensure that the highest proportion of materials can be reused. This will reduce the requirement for new materials for the Proposed Development and in turn reduces the carbon emissions associated with the extraction, manufacture, and transportation of materials to the site.

The demolition works are small in scale and will be completed over a very short period of time as part of site enabling works. The demolition works will be carried out prior to the commencement any construction works using mechanical excavators and plant. This equipment will potentially use fossil fuels, but the possible impact on air and climate associated with this is not significant due to the temporary duration of the demolition works. The management of waste material generated by the proposed demolition works is outlined in Section 3.5.1.5 below.

3.5.1.4 Use of Natural Resources

The use of natural resources are considered, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity.

The consideration of land as a natural resource can be viewed from the perspective of the current land use and the proposed land use in terms of density, sustainable development and achieving the maximum potential of this resource. The proposed application site extends to 2.26 hectares. The land is currently an amenity area made up of carparks, walkways, amenity grassland, scattered trees, and a parkland.

The site is bordered to the north, south and west by Lough Rea and to the east by the R351 Lake Road with some minor elements of the project located within Lough Rea. Lough Rea includes both Lough Rea SAC and Lough Rea SPA. The Kilcogan stream drains Lough Rea to the north which drains into Galway Bay Complex SAC and Inner Galway Bay SPA downstream.

The Proposed Development will require the excavation, temporary storage, and reuse of soil materials in backfilling, site reinstatement and landscaping. Given the Proposed Development site is amenity area made up of carparks, walkways, amenity grassland and a parkland, any onsite excavations are anticipated to be inert soil and subsoils. These will be excavated and reused where possible but if removed from the site, will be taken to a licensed facility for recovery and disposal.

The use of water resources at the Proposed Development will likely be limited to amenity consumption. A Civils Report prepared by S. Hanniffy & Associates Consulting Engineers states that surface water from the proposed buildings, carparks and roads will be first conveyed to 1 of 3 petrol interceptors (kingspan klargest bypass interceptor) which include silt traps, and then to 1 of 3 no. attenuation, infiltration, and soakaway systems within the site, with a total capacity of 384.3 m³. It is also proposed to use permeable paving along the quaysides as an additional SuDS measure, allowing surface water to soak directly to ground. There is no requirement for bypass interceptors here as these are for pedestrian use only.

Additionally, the existing foul water system for the current changing facilities is discharged to a foul sewer adjacent to the changing rooms and is pumped to an existing public sewer within the public road to the north of the site. It is proposed to install a new foul sewer system around the new storage/plant building and changing room/WC which will discharge to the existing pump station and then to the existing public sewer north of the site.

3.5.1.5 **Production of Waste**

The production of waste from the Proposed Development during its construction phase including the proposal for the management of this waste material is outlined in the accompanying Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) prepared by MKO.

During the construction phase, the CEMP aims to ensure maximum recycling, reuse, and recovery of waste diversion from landfill, wherever possible.

Waste generated during the construction phase of the Proposed Development and proposals for the management of this waste are outlined in the CEMP prepared by MKO. The CEMP states that the production of waste material on this site during the construction phase is to be avoided wherever possible by following the reuse and recycling measures. Only where these routes have been exhausted should waste be sent for disposal.

The waste produced by the Proposed Development during its operational phase will be confined to the proposed amenity waste stream. A development of this nature will generate a waste stream and quantity consistent with any similar developments of this scale.

3.5.1.6 **Pollution and Nuisances**

The examination of the potential of the Proposed Development to cause pollution and nuisance in terms of water, air, noise, and waste is considered as follows.

Pollution associated with waste is addressed in Section 3.5.1.5 above which summarises the proposals for the management and control of waste during both the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development.

The accompanying CEMP prepared by MKO outlines surface water pollution prevention measures to avoid the release of potential pollutants into nearby watercourses. The Proposed Development site has partial overlap with Lough Rea, with some minor elements of the project located within the lake. However, the CEMP outlines a number of mitigation measures that will be implemented to prevent the transportation of any pollutants entering any of the wider environments. Proposed measures are outlined in the accompanying CEMP (see Section 3).

The accompanying NIS prepared by MKO has also implemented surface water pollution prevention measures to avoid the release of potential pollutants into the watercourses adjacent to the site. The management of the surface water run-off during the construction phase will also be carried out in accordance with the Construction Industry Research and Information Association (CIRIA) which provides guidance on the control of water pollution from construction sites and will be carried out in accordance with CIRIA Control of Water Pollution from Construction Sites, guidance for consultants and contractors.

The proposed surface water drainage system has been designed to cater for all surface water runoff from all hardened surfaces in the Proposed Development including roadways, roofs, etc., and includes an integrated SuDS approach. The CEMP (and other relevant documents accompanying this report) set out proposals for the management of surface waters which include site management measures to avoid release of potential pollutants into nearby surface water networks or groundwaters during the construction phase.

The potential for pollution associated with air and noise are described in the characteristics for potential impacts in Section 3.5.1.7 below.

3.5.1.7 Risk of Major Accidents including those caused by Climate Change

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 is considered as follows. The risk of major accidents associated with a development of this type and scale that are considered are accidents associated with traffic, plant, and machinery, contact with underground services and general construction activities.

Other measures such as construction traffic speed restrictions, road cleaning, vehicle cleaning and covering of materials in transit (if necessary) have also been proposed to avoid the deposition of debris on the public roads and the potential for causing an accident.

3.5.1.8 Risk to Human Health

The Proposed Development is not considered to be a type of development that can pose risk to human health by causing environmental impacts such as water contamination or air pollution.

The Proposed Development, during the construction phase, includes for upgrades to the amenity area which will be constructed in accordance with mitigation as set out in the CEMP prepared by MKO for surface waters management (to include implementation of site measures that avoid the release of potential pollutants into the site surface water network or groundwaters). The Proposed Development construction phase will utilise mechanical excavators and plant. This equipment will potentially use fossil fuels, but the possible impact associated with emissions from this plant is not significant and will be short-term in nature. Potential impacts on air quality during the construction phase are mitigated against by proposals outlined within the CEMP prepared by MKO in Section 3.2.

A development of this type during its operational phase is not considered as a development which will have significant emissions like that of an industrial or commercial operation with the site emissions confined to that of wastewater and surface water into a controlled network for appropriate treatment. Potential impacts on air quality during the construction phase are mitigated against by proposals outlined within the CEMP prepared by MKO.

The potential risk to human health during the construction phase both to site operatives and the general public will be assessed and controlled within the Health and Safety Plan which will be prepared prior to the inception of construction works.

3.5.2 Location of the Proposed Development

The location of the Proposed Development is considered for determining whether the Proposed Development would be likely to have significant impacts on the environment in the sections below in accordance with Schedule 7 of the Regulations.

3.5.2.1 Existing and Approved Land Use

It has been established that the Proposed Development site is currently a highly modified amenity area dominated by buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3), amenity grassland (GA2), and scattered trees and parkland (WD5). The EcIA shows that the value of habitats and key sensitive receptors is low. The potential residual impacts on ecological receptors will not be significant and no potential for the Proposed Development to contribute to any cumulative impacts on biodiversity when considered in combination with other plans and projects was identified. Provided that the Proposed Development is constructed and operated in accordance with the design described within this application, significant effects on biodiversity are not anticipated at any geographic scale.

3.5.2.2 Abundance, Availability, Quality and Regenerative Capacity of Natural Resources

The site of the Proposed Development is not a recognised source of natural resources in terms of extractable materials with the exception of soils and subsoils. Soils material will be both excavated and used as part of site reinstatement. The underlying geology of the site is Waulsortian Limestone Formation.

In addition, the other natural resources which require consideration in the area are groundwater and surface water. The works associated with the Proposed Development have the potential for pollution to impact of groundwater and surface water through accidental hydrocarbon contamination of the area by fuel spillages or oil leaks, for example with the use and presence of fuels on site.

Based on the GSI groundwater vulnerability mapping, the majority of the site has a Low (L) vulnerability with the circumference of the site (surrounding Lough Rea) characterised as Rock at or near Surface or Karst (X) with areas leading to the north of the site as Moderate (M), High (H) and E (Extreme).

The CEMP prepared by MKO, and other supporting documents outline the necessary waste management for the project which includes bunding of fuels, spill kits, etc.

The potential for impact during the operational phase is much reduced as there will be no fuel burning plant and equipment on site thereafter. The site will also have areas of impermeable surfaces most notably in access roads and parking areas on which vehicles will travel.

3.5.2.3 Absorption Capacity of the Natural Environment

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

(i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;

The Proposed Development is not located in a wetland, riparian area or a river mouth.

(ii) coastal zones and the marine environment;

The Proposed Development site is not located in a coastal zone or the marine environment.

(ii) mountain and forest areas;

The Proposed Development site is not located in mountain and forest areas.

(ii) nature reserves and parks;

The Proposed Development site is located in a nature reserve and park.

The potential for impact on European Sites has been fully assessed in the NIS that has been prepared in support of the current application.

The following European Sites are located in proximity to the Proposed Development site and thus their connectivity and whether they are within the Likely Zone of Impact was assessed:

- Lough Rea SAC [000304]
- Lough Rea SPA [0041134]
- Slieve Aught Mountains SPA [004168]
- Sonnagh Bog SAC [001913]
- Rahasane Turlough SAC [000322]
- Rahasane Turlough SPA [004089]
- Galway Bay Complex SAC [000268]
- Inner Galway Bay SPA [004031]

The assessment found that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, would be likely to have a significant effect on the on Lough Rea SAC [000304] Lough Rea SPA [0041134], which are both partially located within the Proposed Development site boundary along the southern extent. Additionally, there is the potential for significant effect on Rahasane Turlough SAC [000322], Galway Bay Complex SAC [000268], Rahasane Turlough SPA [004089], and Inner Galway Bay SPA [004031]. Therefore, there is potential for indirect effect in the form of deterioration in surface water quality during the construction phase. There is no potential for deterioration of groundwater quality during the operational phase of the Proposed Development as the foul and surface water design measures have been designed in accordance with the relevant standards and will ensure no impact on groundwater quality.

After detailed assessment, the NIS concluded the following:

Where the potential for any adverse effect on any European Site has been identified, the pathway by which any such effect may occur has been robustly blocked through the use of avoidance, appropriate design and mitigation measures as set out within this report and its appendices. The measures ensure that the construction and operation of the Proposed Development does not adversely affect the integrity of European sites.

Therefore, it can be objectively concluded that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site.

Additionally, the EcIA prepared by MKO for the Proposed Development states the following:

The potential residual impacts on ecological receptors will not be significant and no potential for the Proposed Development to contribute to any cumulative impacts on biodiversity when considered in combination with other plans and projects was identified. Provided that the Proposed Development is constructed and operated in accordance with the design described within this application, significant effects on biodiversity are not anticipated at any geographic scale.

(i) densely populated areas;

The Proposed Development site is located in Loughrea at Long Point on the shore of Lough Rea and is located approximately 1.4 km southeast of Loughrea Town Centre in the townland of Knockanima.

Whilst there may potentially be some noise impacts on neighbouring sensitive receptors as a result of the proposed construction works, such impacts will be short term and imperceptible and will be further mitigated against by the measures outlined in the accompanying CEMP prepared by MKO for the Proposed Development.

(i) *landscapes and sites of historical, cultural, or archaeological significance.*

A desktop study of the Proposed Development to screen for archaeology and national monuments was carried out by MKO. The desktop study identified no known cultural heritage assets within the development area. The closest recorded archaeological monuments is a crannog (GA105-226—), located approximately 116 m north of the Proposed Development. The next closest is another designated Crannog (GA105-227—), located approximately 219 m south of the Proposed Development. A review of the NIAH records show no buildings or protected structures within the wider study area.

3.5.3 Characteristics of Potential Impacts

The examination of whether the Proposed Development would be likely to have significant impacts on the environment, in relation to the criteria as set out in Section 3.5.1 and 3.5.2 and with regard to the impact of the project on the factors specified in Section 171A of the Act (for the definition of EIAR) have been taken into account in the sections below.

3.5.3.1 Population and Human Health

Magnitude and Spatial Extent of the Impact

Potential impacts include changes to population and impacts on human health receptors in the vicinity of the site, in particular during the construction phase. The magnitude and scale of the Proposed Development is significantly below the appropriate EIA threshold for a development in a rural setting. The development involves public realm upgrade works to an existing amenity area already used for this purpose. In addition, the development is zoned as ‘OS – Open Space/Recreation and Amenity’ in the Loughrea Local Area Plan 2024-2023.

Nature of the Impact

The Proposed Development will have a positive impact on local population by providing upgrades to the existing amenity area as part of the Outdoor Amenity Enhancement project inclusive of repair works, provision of new changing rooms, bathrooms and lifeguard station building and upgrades to the existing car park. According to the Loughrea Local Area Plan 2024-2023, the Proposed Development is zoned for amenity uses.

The development is not considered to be the type of development that can pose a significant risk to human health. There is the potential for negative impacts associated with the construction phase, however these can be managed using appropriate construction methodologies and mitigation as set out in the accompanying CEMP and other technical reports.

Transboundary Nature of the Impact

The Proposed Development will be confined to the extents of a 2.26 hectare site with some off-site works associated with services connections and infrastructural improvements. There are no transboundary effects for consideration.

Intensity and Complexity of the Impact

There are no intense or complex impacts associated with this residential development. The character/quality of any of the environmental factors discussed in this section of the EIAR having the potential to impact population and human health will not change significantly. The positive impact as outlined in the Nature of the Impact section above will be imperceptible provided that development is constructed in line with project design. The negative impact as outlined in the Nature of the Impact

section above will be imperceptible provided that the control measures outlined in the CEMP and accompanying documents are implemented at the site.

Probability of the Impact

The probability for significant negative impacts on the environment or impacts on population and human health is considered unlikely. This conclusion is based on the scale of the development, its location and the nature of the potential impacts identified in this section and the design measures incorporated into the project and the proposed mitigation measures.

Expected Onset, Duration, Frequency and Reversibility of the Impact

The potential negative impacts associated with the construction phase will be short-term provided the appropriate mitigation measures are implemented. There are no negative impacts anticipated within the operational phase on human health. The positive impacts identified that the Proposed Development could have on population within the operational phase will be permanent.

Cumulation of the Impact

Section 3.5.1.2 above has concluded that significant environmental impacts from a cumulation of the Proposed Development with existing and permitted development is unlikely.

Possibility of Effectively Reducing the Impact

Best practice and mitigation to reduce potential negative impacts has been set out in the various documents prepared as part of this application.

The CEMP and NIS, prepared by MKO, comprehensively outlines the environmental management measures to reduce the potential impacts with relation to air quality, noise and vibration, soil and groundwater, surface water, and ecology. Section 4 of the accompanying CEMP and Section 6 of the NIS provide complete lists of the environmental management measures.

3.5.3.2 Biodiversity

Magnitude and Spatial Extent of the Impact

The NIS identified European Sites within and outside the Likely Zone of Impact and conducted further assessment into potential impacts on those identified to be within the Likely Zone of Impact.

The NIS has that the Proposed Development may have the potential to result in significant impacts on the following European Sites:

- Lough Rea SAC [000304]
- Lough Rea SPA [0041134]
- Slieve Aught Mountains SPA [004168]
- Sonnagh Bog SAC [001913]
- Rahasane Turlough SAC [000322]
- Rahasane Turlough SPA [004089]
- Galway Bay Complex SAC [000268]
- Inner Galway Bay SPA [004031]

Given that the potential pathways for significant impacts on European Sites has been identified, an NIS and an EcIA were prepared and accompany this ELASR.

The NIS concluded that

“following an examination, analysis and evaluation of the relevant data and information set out within this ELASR, it can be objectively concluded that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site.”

The EcIA concludes that

“provided the Proposed Development is constructed and operated in accordance with the design and best practice that is described within this application, significant impacts on biodiversity are not anticipated at any geographical scale”.

The magnitude and scale of the Proposed Development is below the appropriate threshold for amenity developments in such a setting. The Proposed Development will be confined to the extents of the 2.26 hectare site with some off-site works associated with services connections and infrastructural improvements. The Proposed Development and whether it would be likely to have significant impacts on the environment through cumulation with other existing developments is considered within Section 3.5.

Nature of the Impact

Impacts on biodiversity are addressed in the accompanying NIS which describes the nature of the potential negative impacts. These relate to construction phase impacts. The potential residual impacts on ecological receptors will not be significant and no potential for the Proposed Development to contribute to any cumulative impacts on biodiversity when considered in-combination with other plans and projects was identified. Any impacts are expected to be mitigated through a constraint-led design process and best practice measures during the construction phase of the Proposed Development.

With respect to potential impacts on European Sites, the NIS concluded objectively that the Proposed Development will not result in any residual adverse effects on any of the European Sites, their integrity or their conservation objectives when considered on its own. There is therefore no potential for the Proposed Development to contribute to any cumulative adverse effects on any European Site when considered in-combination with other plans and projects.

Transboundary Nature of the Impact

The Proposed Development will be confined to the extents of the 2.26 hectare site with some off-site works associated with services connections and infrastructural improvements. There are no transboundary impacts for consideration.

Intensity and Complexity of the Impact

There are no intense or complex impacts associated with this amenity development. Standard construction techniques are proposed. The character/quality of any of the environmental factors discussed in this section of the ELASR having the potential to impact biodiversity will not change significantly. The Proposed Development will not result in significant impacts on the environment provided the project design and mitigation measures are implemented.

The negative impact as outlined in the Nature of the Impact section above will be slight provided that the control measures outlined in the accompanying documents are implemented at the site.

Probability of the Impact

The probability for significant impacts on the environment or impacts on biodiversity is considered unlikely. This conclusion is based on the value of the receptors; the scale; the location and nature of the project; the design proposals which have been incorporated into the project design; and the proposed mitigation measures.

Expected Onset, Duration, Frequency and Reversibility of the Impact

The impacts associated with the construction phase will be permanent (habitat loss). The operational phase is permanent, with no decommissioning works envisioned. Impacts associated with the operational phase will be permanent. However, the EcIA states that the Proposed Development will not result in loss of habitats of Local Importance (*Lower Value*) and of Local Importance (*Higher value*) or higher. The potential for significant impacts on habitats is restricted to direct and indirect effects on aquatic habitats, via the deterioration of water quality. However, the EcIA concludes that provided the Proposed Development is constructed and operated in accordance with the design and best practice that is described within this application, significant effects on biodiversity are not anticipated at any geographical scale.

Cumulation of the Impact

EcIA and NIS has concluded that significant environmental impacts from a cumulation of the Proposed Development with existing developments are unlikely.

Possibility of Effectively Reducing the Impact

Mitigation measures will be put in place during the construction works as set out in the accompanying CEMP and NIS prepared by MKO.

In-Lake Works Control Measures

- Works will be carried out in the dry to avoid siltation of the Lough Rea and downstream watercourses.
- The areas within Lough Rea where works are required will be temporarily dammed (coffer dam) with sandbags and will completely surround the work area. A silt curtain will also be installed if deemed necessary.
- No batching of wet-cement products will occur on site. Ready-mixed supply of wet concrete products and pre-cast elements for culverts and concrete works will be used.
- Prior to the installation of the precast elements, minor excavation and grading works will be carried out to achieve the appropriate installation levels.
- A submersible pump will be used to pump water out of the works area, creating a dry working area, and will be pumped to a discharge point, a minimum of 30 m from any waterbody and within the Proposed Development site. It will pass through a silt bag before discharge to ground.
- Prior to pumping, electrofishing should be carried out within the works area under licence from the NPWS by a qualified ecologist to remove any fisheries and move them into Lough Rea.
- Machinery will not enter the water.
- Once works within these areas are complete, the sandbags will be removed to allow water from the lake back into the area.
- All in-lake works will be carried out according to Inland Fisheries Ireland (2016) *Guidelines on Protection of Fisheries During Construction Works in and Adjacent to Waters*.
- The deck/steps, ramp and other in-lake works should be carried out during the period of July 1st to September 30th to minimise potential adverse impacts to fisheries,

in line with Inland Fisheries Ireland (2016) *Guidelines on Protection of Fisheries During Construction Works in and Adjacent to Waters*.

Prevention Pollution Control Measures

- Prior to the commencement of earthworks, silt fencing will be erected around the boundary of the Proposed Development site, between the works area and along the shore of Lough Rea. This will be embedded into the ground adjacent to the perimeter boundary.
- The silt fence will comprise wooden posts with geotextile membrane buried approximately 250 mm below ground level. This fence will be kept in good repair and will be routinely inspected
- The silt fences will be left in place throughout construction until all exposed soil has revegetated.
- A site compound will be established within the site boundary. The exact location of the site compound will be established by the contractor and will be located a minimum of 50 m from any watercourses or waterbodies. The compound will be used for storage of material, machinery, fuel, and workers facilities.
- A self-contained port-a-loo with an integrated waste holding tank will be used at the site compounds, maintained by the providing contractor, and removed from site on completion of the construction works. No foul water will be discharged onsite during the construction.
- The appointed contractor will be fully briefed by an ecologist as to the sensitive nature of the site (i.e., proximity to Lough Rea) and the required mitigation measures.
- The contractor will assign a member of the site staff as the environmental officer with the responsibility for ensuring the environmental measures prescribed in this document are adhered to. Any environmental incidents or non-compliance issues will immediately be reported to the project team.
- In addition, a suitably qualified ecologist will be appointed to supervise the works undertaken during construction, particularly where works within the lake are required.
- Excavated spoil (if any) will be stockpiled and contained entirely within the confines of the site boundaries.
- During earthwork activities, the following mitigations will be adhered to:
 - Excavation depths will be kept to a minimum.
 - Material that is not re-used will be transported off site to an appropriately licensed waste recovery/disposal facility.
 - Suitable stone material will be imported to the site to be used as backfill.
 - Stockpiling of soil during construction, should it be required, will take place in designated areas within the site boundary away from any watercourses or waterbodies.
 - A silt fence will be erected around any stockpiling of material to prevent any sediment-laden run-off occurring.
- All diesel or petrol pumps required onsite will be operated within bunded units.
- Exposed surfaces will be re-vegetated as soon as possible following construction.
- The minimum number of soil/subsoils and bedrock material will be removed from site. Soil may be reused for landscaping elsewhere on the site.
- Earthworks will not be carried out during periods of heavy rainfall.
- As construction advances there may be a requirement to collect and treat surface water within the site. This will be completed using perimeter swales at low points around the construction areas, and if required will be tankered off site for appropriate treatment.
- If ground water is encountered during excavations, waters will be pumped from excavation and discharged through a pipe with a silt bag attached on to an area of overland vegetation within the Proposed Development site boundary.

- Discharge to ground will be via a silt bag which will filter any remaining sediment from the pumped water;
- Daily monitoring and inspections of site drainage during construction will be completed by the appointed environmental officer;
- Good construction practices such as wheel washers and dust suppression on site roads, and regular plant maintenance will ensure minimal risk.
- The Construction Industry Research and Information Association (CIRIA) provides a guidance document on the control and management of water pollution from construction sites, *Control of Water Pollution from Construction Sites, guidance for consultants and contractors* (CIRIA, 2010). Adherence to these guidelines shall ensure that runoff occurrences during the construction phase activities shall contain minimum sediment.

Cement Based Products Control Measures

- No batching of wet-cement products will occur on site.
- Ready-mixed supply of wet concrete will be used.
- Where possible, pre-cast elements for concrete works will be used.
- No washing out of any plant used in concrete transport or concreting operations will be allowed onsite.
- Where concrete is delivered on site, only chute cleaning will be permitted, using the smallest volume of water possible.
- No discharge of cement contaminated waters to the construction phase drainage system or directly to any artificial drain or watercourse will be allowed.
- Use weather forecasting to plan dry days for pouring concrete.
- Ensure the pour site is free of standing water and plastic covers are to be ready in case of sudden rainfall event.

Refuelling, Fuel and Hazardous Materials Storage

- Storage/refuelling will be located in and carried out in a designated area of the Proposed Development site, located a suitable distance from excavation works. Bunded tanks will be used, and these will be inspected for leaks regularly. Spill kits will be available on site and staff will be trained in their use and in spill control. All spills shall be diverted for collection.
- Fuels, lubricants and hydraulic fluids for equipment used on the site will be carefully handled to avoid spillage, properly secured against unauthorised access or vandalism, and provided with spill containment.
- Waste oils and hydraulic fluids will be collected in leak-proof containers and removed from the site for disposal or recycling.
- Minimal refuelling or maintenance of construction vehicles or plant will take place on site. Off-site refuelling will occur at a controlled fuelling station.
- Onsite refuelling will take place by direct refuelling from the delivery truck or from fuel stored within a bunded fuel tank. Mobile measures such as drip trays and fuel absorbent mats will be used during all refuelling operations.
- Vehicles will never be left unattended during refuelling. Only dedicated trained and competent personnel will carry out refuelling operations and plant refuelling procedures shall be detailed in the contractor's method statements.
- Storage bunds/trays, if required will be constructed of an impermeable membrane (HDPC Plastic) and will have the adequate capacity to contain the volume of the liquids contained therein, if a leak/spillage does occur from one of the storage vessels.
- The storage area will contain a small bund lined with an impermeable membrane in order to prevent any contamination of the surrounding soils and vegetation.
- All site plant will be inspected at the beginning of each day prior to use. Defective plant shall not be used until the defect is satisfactorily fixed. All major repair and maintenance operations will take place off site.

- Potential impacts caused by spillages etc. during the construction phase will be reduced by keeping spill kits and other appropriate equipment onsite.

Dust Control

- The designated public roads outside the site and along the main transport routes to the site will be regularly inspected by Site Management for cleanliness and cleaned as necessary.
- Material handling systems and material storage areas, if required will be designed and laid out to minimise exposure to wind.
- Water misting will be utilised onsite as required to mitigate dust in dry weather conditions, if required.
- The transport of soils, demolition material, aggregates or other material, which has the potential to generate dust, will be undertaken in tarpaulin-covered vehicles where necessary.
- Daily inspection of construction sites to examine dust measures and their effectiveness.
- All construction related traffic will have speed restrictions on un-surfaced areas within the site to 60kph.

Noise and Vibration Control

- Construction equipment for use outdoors shall comply with the European Communities Regulations– Noise Emission by Equipment for Use Outdoors – SI 241 - 2006.
- If utilised, diesel generators will be enclosed in sound proofed containers to minimise the potential for noise impacts.
- Plant and machinery with low inherent potential for generation of noise and/or vibration will be selected. All construction plant and equipment to be used onsite will be modern equipment and will comply with the European Communities (Construction Plant and Equipment) (Permissible Noise Levels) Regulations.
- Plant with the potential of generating noise or vibration will be placed as far away from sensitive properties as permitted by site constraints.
- Regular maintenance of plant will be carried out in order to minimise noise emissions. Particular attention will be paid to the lubrication of bearings and the integrity of silencers.
- All plant will be fitted with effective exhaust silencers and maintained in good working order for the duration of the works.
- If compressors are required, they will be of the “sound reduced” models fitted with properly lined and sealed acoustic covers which will be kept closed whenever the machines are in use and all ancillary pneumatic tools shall be fitted with suitable silencers.
- Machines, which are used intermittently, will be shut down during those periods when they are not in use.
- Training will be provided by the Site Management to drivers to ensure smooth machinery operation/driving, and to minimise unnecessary noise generation.
- Where necessary, further measures for the reduction of construction noise and vibration levels will be defined by Galway County Council and adhered to by the Main Contractor.

Traffic Management

- Warning signs / Advanced warning signs will be installed at appropriate locations in advance of the construction site access locations.
- A site specific Construction Traffic and Transport Statement will be agreed upon with the Galway County Council prior to works starting.

- Construction and delivery vehicles will be instructed to use only the approved and agreed means of access; and movement of construction vehicles will be restricted to these designated routes.
- Appropriate vehicles will be used to minimise environmental impacts from transporting construction material, for example the use of dust covers on HGVs carrying dust producing material.
- Speed limits of construction vehicles to be managed by appropriate signage, to promote low vehicular speeds.
- Parking of site vehicles will be managed and will not be permitted on public road, unless proposed within a designated area that is subject to traffic management measures and agreed with Galway County Council.
- Deliveries of construction materials will be planned to ensure that the materials are delivered only as they are required and will avoid peak hours when possible.
- Works that require the use of multiple vehicles, such as concrete pours, will be planned to ensure there will be no queuing on the public roadways surrounding the site.
- A road sweeper will be employed, if necessary, to clean the public roads of any residual debris that may be deposited on the public roads leading away from the construction works.
- On site wheel washing will be undertaken for construction vehicles to remove any debris prior to leaving the site.
- All vehicles will be suitably serviced and maintained to avoid any leaks or spillage of oil, petrol or diesel. All scheduled maintenance will not be carried out on the public highway.
- Safe and secure pedestrian facilities are to be provided where construction works obscure any existing pedestrian footways. Alternative pedestrian facilities will be provided in these instances, supported by physical barriers to segregate traffic and pedestrian movements, and to be identified by appropriate signage. Pedestrian facilities will cater for vulnerable users including mobility impaired persons.

Invasive Species Management

- Good construction site hygiene will be employed to prevent the introduction and spread of problematic invasive alien plant species (e.g. Rhododendron, Japanese Knotweed, Giant Rhubarb etc.) by thoroughly washing vehicles prior to entering the site.
- A risk assessment and method statement must be provided by the Contractor prior to commencing works.
- Fences will be erected around areas of infestation, as confirmed by test pits, and warning signs shall be erected.
- A designated wash-down area will be created, where power-washed material from machinery can be contained, collected, and disposed of with other contaminated material. This area will contain a washable membrane or hard surface.
- Stockpile areas will be chosen to minimise movement of contaminated soil.
- Stockpiles will be marked and isolated.
- Contaminated areas which will not be excavated will be protected by a root barrier membrane if they are likely to be disturbed by machinery. Root barrier membranes will be protected by a layer of sand above and below and topped with a layer of hardcore.
- The use of vehicles with caterpillar tracks within contaminated areas will be avoided to minimise the risk of spreading contaminated material.
- Any material that is imported onto any site will be verified by a suitably qualified ecologist to be free from any invasive species listed on the 'Third Schedule' of Regulations 49 & 50 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I 477 of 2011). This will be carried out by searching for rhizomes and plant material.

- Any soil and topsoil required on the site will be sourced from a stock that has been screened for the presence of any invasive species and where it is confirmed that none are present.
- Any soils or subsoils contaminated with invasive species will be sent for disposal to an authorized waste facility.
- A suitably qualified ecologist will be on site to monitor and oversee the implementation of invasive species remedial works.

Plant and equipment which is operated within an area for the management of materials in contaminated areas will be decontaminated prior to relocating to a different works area. The decontamination procedures will take account of the following:

- Personnel may only clean down if they are familiar with the plant and rhizome material and can readily identify it.
- Decontamination will only occur within designated wash-down areas.
- Vehicles will be cleaned using stiff-haired brush and pressure washers, paying special attention to any areas that might retain rhizomes e.g., wheel treads and arches.
- All run-off will be isolated and treated as contaminated material. This will be disposed of in already contaminated areas.

3.5.3.3 Land, Soil, Water, Air and Climate

Magnitude and Spatial Extent of the Impact

The Proposed Development will be confined to the extents of the 2.26 hectare with some off-site works associated with services connections and infrastructural improvements. The magnitude and scale of the Proposed Development is below the appropriate EIA threshold for amenity developments in a rural setting. The Proposed Development and whether it would be likely to have significant impacts on the environment through cumulation with other existing developments is considered in Section 3.5.1.2 above and at the end of this section.

Nature of the Impact

The Proposed Development Site within the application is 2.26 hectare in size. The Proposed Development Site is an amenity area on the shore of Lough Rea, which is currently made up of carparks, walkways, amenity grassland, and a parkland. A development of this nature will not have any operational impacts on land as an amenity development is not of a project class that has potential to have significant affects on land and soils. Therefore, impacts during the operational phase are anticipated to be not imperceptible and neutral.

There is potential for negative impacts during the construction phase as a result of excavation works. Surface waters and groundwaters have the potential to be impacted by the proposed construction works through runoff of silt laden surface or pollution events associated with hydrocarbon spillages. Appropriate mitigation/measures have been proposed to block pathways to the sensitive receptors. These measures are outlined in the CEMP and other accompanying technical reports.

The construction phase will utilise mechanical excavators and plant. This equipment will potentially use fossil fuels, but the possible impact on air and climate associated with this is not significant and will be short-term in nature.

For the operational phase, the Proposed Development is not a recognised emitter of greenhouse gases with the potential to impact climate change.

Transboundary Nature of the Impact

The Proposed Development will be confined to the extents of the 2.26 hectare site with some off-site works associated with services connections and infrastructural improvements. The only transboundary impacts for consideration are the wastewaters which will leave the site. All foul water will be discharged to the proposed foul water sewers as outlined in drawing no. R116-CSC-01-ZZ-SK-C-20 prepared by the CS Consulting Group (Cronin & Sutton).

There are no transboundary impacts associated with land, soils, and air & climate for consideration.

Intensity and Complexity of the Impact

There are no intense or complex impacts associated with this amenity development. The character/quality of any of the environmental factors discussed in this section of the ELASR having the potential to impact land, soil, water, and air & climate will not change significantly. There will be a negative, impact on land, soil, water, air & climate during the construction phase. The impact will be imperceptible provided the project design and mitigation measures are implemented.

The negative impact as outlined in the Nature of the Impact section above will be imperceptible provided that the control measures outlined in the CEMP and other accompanying documents are implemented at the site.

Probability of the Impact

The probability for significant impacts on the environment or impacts on land, soil, water, and air & climate is unlikely. This conclusion is based on the value of the sensitive receptors, the scale, nature and location of the project, the project design proposals incorporated into the project design and the proposed mitigation measures.

Expected Onset, Duration, Frequency and Reversibility of the Impact

The impacts associated with the construction phase will be short-term. Imperceptible impacts during the operational phase are anticipated to be long term in nature. However, it has been concluded that the Proposed Development will not result in significant impacts on the environment provided the project design and mitigation measures are implemented.

Cumulation of the Impact

Section 3.5.1.2 above has concluded that significant environmental impacts from a cumulation of the Proposed Development with existing development is unlikely.

Possibility of Effectively Reducing the Impact

Mitigation measures to reduce the likelihood of negative impacts on land, soil, water, air, and climate during the construction phase have been outlined in the accompanying CEMP and any other accompanying reports.

In terms of potential impacts associated with wastewater which will discharge from the site by the proposed foul sewer system around the new storage/plant building and changing room/WC which will discharge to the existing pump station and then to the existing public sewer north of the site. Once waste water has been discharged to the sewer it will flow to a wastewater treatment plant for appropriate treatment. Given that waste will be appropriately treated to EPA standards, no potential for significant effects on water quality exists as results of wastewater generated by the Proposed Development.

3.5.3.4 **Material Assets, Cultural Heritage, and the Landscape**

Magnitude and Spatial Extent of the Impact

The Proposed Development will be confined to the extents of the 2.26 hectare site with some off-site works associated with services connections and infrastructural improvements. The magnitude and scale of the Proposed Development is below the appropriate EIA threshold for developments in such a setting. The Proposed Development and whether it would be likely to have significant impacts on the environment through cumulation with other existing developments is considered in Section 3.5.1.2.

Nature of the Impact

The material assets that may be negatively impacted by the Proposed Development comprise existing services and utilities.

The works and, in particular, the bulk excavation works, have the potential to come into contact and impact previously unidentified underground services should they exist.

The same can be said for archaeological features. The closest recorded monument is located 116 m north. There is no registered archaeological monument present within the confines of the site boundary.

Material assets are also considered in terms of traffic management and impacts associated with the Proposed Development and the road network. There will be a potential negative impact on material assets and the landscape during the construction phase. However, these potential impacts will be mitigated against by the mitigation and design measures outlined in the CEMP and other accompanying reports.

Materials assets are also considered in terms of built services. There will be a potential positive impact on material assets during the operational phase. As the Proposed Development includes upgrades to an amenity area, providing an upgraded sewage system, a proposed surface water drainage system, and junction upgrade works it is anticipated that there will be a positive impact in this context.

The nature of impact associated with landscape is considered in terms of the magnitude of change imposed on the landscape with reference to its key elements, features, and characteristics (also known as ‘landscape receptors’) combined with the sensitivity of the landscape to determine the landscape impact.

Transboundary Nature of the Impact

There are no transboundary impacts associated with material assets, cultural heritage, and the landscape for consideration.

Intensity and Complexity of the Impact

There are no intense or complex impacts associated with this development. Any potential impacts on material assets and cultural heritage will be imperceptible provided the project design and mitigation measures are implemented.

Probability of the Impact

The probability for significant impacts on the environment or impacts on material assets, cultural heritage and landscape is unlikely. This conclusion is based on the value of the sensitive receptors, the scale, nature and location of the project, the project design proposals incorporated into the project design and the proposed mitigation measures.

Expected Onset, Duration, Frequency and Reversibility of the Impact

The impacts associated with material assets and cultural heritage during the construction phase will be short-term. There are no significant impacts anticipated relating to material assets and cultural heritage during the operational phase.

The impacts on landscape during the construction phase will be short-term. The impacts on landscape in the operational phase will be permanent however, the landscape impacts are localised.

Cumulation of the Impact

The technical reports and Section 3.5.1.2 above have concluded that significant environmental impacts from a cumulation of the Proposed Development with existing development is unlikely.

Possibility of Effectively Reducing the Impact

Mitigation to reduce the impact on material assets, cultural heritage and landscape has been set out in the various documents prepared as part of this application as listed in Section 1. It is summarised here as follows:

Traffic Management proposals have been set out in the Traffic and Transportation Assessment prepared by Alan Lipscombe. These measures are in relation to the increase in traffic to the area as a result of the construction activities, working times and traffic movements as a result of the Proposed Development.

The Landscape Soft Works report prepared by Cooney McDowall Design Studio Ltd outlines that landscaping designs for the Proposed Development will enhance the biodiversity of the site by incorporating native wildflower zones/reduced mowing areas, pollinator friendly area, woodland tree clusters, avenue tree planting, swale planting and amenity grasslands.

3.5.3.5 Interactions

The preceding sections examine whether the Proposed Development would be likely to have significant impacts on the environment based on the criteria set out in Section 3.5.1 and 3.5.2 in regard to potential impacts on the factors specified in Section 171A of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) (for the definition of an EIAR).

This section examines the interaction between those factors and whether the Proposed Development would be likely to have significant impacts on the environment arising from these interactions.

The various anticipated interactions are summarised as follows:

- Population and Human Health
 - Air and Climate, Land, Soils and Geology, Water, Material Assets and Landscape
- Biodiversity
 - Land, Soils and Geology, Water, Air and Climate and Landscape
- Land, Soils and Geology
 - Water, Cultural Heritage, and Landscape
- Air and Climate
 - Material Assets
- Landscape
 - Cultural Heritage

The examination of these factors individually concluded that significant impacts on the environment was unlikely.

Where any potential interactive negative impacts have been identified in the above, appropriate mitigation measures has already been included in the various documents included with this application (see Section 1).

- Interactions between Population and Human Health and Water have been mitigated in the CEMP through measures provided for the management of fuels and hydrocarbons on site during construction.
- Interactions between Population and Human Health and Landscape have been mitigated in the Landscape Design Report which included proposals to introduce native wildflower zones/reduced mowing areas along with other measures.
- Interactions between Biodiversity and Land, Soils and Geology Assets have been mitigated in the CEMP, NIS and EcIA through soil and earthworks management and proposals to minimise where possible along with material waste management and site reinstatement proposals.
- Interactions between Biodiversity and Water have been mitigated in the CEMP through measures provided for the management of fuels and hydrocarbons on site during construction.
- Interactions between Biodiversity and Air & Climate have been mitigated in the CEMP through measures provided for the management of dust from construction works.
- Interactions between Biodiversity and Landscape have been mitigated in the Landscape Design Statement which outlines how trees be planted.
- Interactions between Land, Soils and Geology and Water have been mitigated in the CEMP through measures provided for the management of soil & groundwater and surface water.
- Interactions between Land, Soils and Geology and Cultural Heritage. Mitigations have been provided in the Site investigations (SI) Report which accompanies this application.
- Interactions between Land, Soils and Geology and Landscape have been mitigated in the CEMP prepared by MKO and Landscape Design Statement through soil and earthworks management and proposals to minimise where possible along with material waste management and site reinstatement proposals.
- Interactions between Landscape and Cultural Heritage have been assessed and it was concluded that the proposed works will not likely impact on archaeological landscape.

3.5.4 Summary of Schedule 7 Criteria Examination

This section has examined the Proposed Development and whether it would be likely to have significant impacts on the environment having regards to the criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the Regulations. It has considered the scale, location and nature of the Proposed Development as well as the results of the technical reports, the design proposals and the proposed mitigation measures proposed to control emissions, reduce energy, and resource consumption.

The characteristics and scale of the Proposed Development have been described and assessed in line with Schedule 7 Paragraph 1 of the Regulations. It concluded that:

- Site area, building heights with the Proposed Development are consistent and in line with relevant guidance, planning schemes and development plans.
- Significant environmental effects from a cumulation of the Proposed Development with existing development is unlikely based on the review of the relevant technical reports, the project design decisions and the proposed mitigation measures which effectively reduces the potential for cumulative effects.

- The use or potential impact on natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity is assessed above and found that potential impact will be slight and mitigated through site reinstatement.
- The drainage design proposed in the accompanying Civils Report prepared by S. Hanniffy & Associates Consulting Engineers for the Proposed Development outlines the management of surface water and storm water. The CEMP prepared by MKO sets out proposals for the management of surface waters which include site management measures during construction.
- The risk to human health has been mitigated by adequate drainage design proposals, traffic management and health and safety procedures for the construction phase.

The location of the Proposed Development has been examined in line with Schedule 7 Paragraph 2 of the Regulations. It is concluded that:

- There is one significant watercourse within the site boundary. The site has partial overlap with Lough Rea, with some minor elements of the project located within the lake.
- Foul water from the Proposed Development will be treated in a new water treatment plant which will be installed within the site boundary.
- It can be objectively concluded that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site.
- An examination of the planning history of the site did not identify an enforcement proceeding from the local authority with regards planning consent or failures to meet environmental quality standards.

The nature and characteristics of potential impacts from the Proposed Development have been examined in line with Schedule 7 Paragraph 3 of the Regulations. It is concluded that:

- The impacts on Population and Human Health associated with the construction phase will be imperceptible and short-term. There are no impacts anticipated with the operational phase.
- The impacts on Biodiversity associated with the construction phase will be slight and long term. The operational phase impacts will be neutral and long term.
- The impacts on Land, Soil, Water, Air and Climate associated with the construction phase will be imperceptible and short-term. It is anticipated that there will be a neutral and permanent impact during the operational phase of the Proposed Development.
- The impacts on Material Assets, Cultural Heritage and the Landscape associated with the construction phase will be imperceptible and short-term. There are no impacts anticipated with the operational phase on Cultural heritage. The impacts on material assets and landscape will be permanent and imperceptible.

Based on the findings of the examination above and the summary of conclusions that have been presented and the anticipated short-term duration of construction phase impacts, it is concluded that the Proposed Development is not considered likely to have significant impacts on the environment.

There is no real likelihood of significant environmental impacts either alone or in cumulation with other existing and permitted projects associated with the Proposed Development.

3.6

Schedule 7A Sub-threshold Criteria

The Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) under Article 103 outlines that 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, and location of the development. Where the planning authority concludes, based on that preliminary examination of the Proposed Development, that there is significant and realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant impacts on the environment 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.

For the avoidance of doubt, the information specified in Schedule 7A of the Regulations is provided in this section. In addition, any further relevant information on the characteristics of the Proposed Development and its likely significant impacts on the environment is also provided.

3.6.1

Description of the Proposed Development

Schedule 7a, Paragraph 1 requires:

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.

The Proposed Development will comprise the upgrade of an amenity area and all associated works on a 2.26 hectare site. The assessment for an EIA under the appropriate threshold in Section 3.3 demonstrates that the Proposed Development is well below the thresholds set in the Regulations.

As outlined in Section 3.5.1.3, demolition works will consist of the demolition of the existing changing area which is located in the west corner of the site.

The location of the development relative to areas of environmental sensitivity area examined in Section 3.5.2.3 above. In summary it has been concluded that the Proposed Development is in compliance with the objectives of the listed plans that relate to ecologically important features.

The potential for impact on European Sites has been fully assessed in the NIS prepared in support of the current application. The NIS stated that it can be objectively concluded that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site.

3.6.2

Aspects of the Environment likely to be Significantly Affected

Schedule 7a, Paragraph 2 requires:

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

Section 3.5.3 above describes the aspects of the environment with regard to the impact of the project on the factors specified in section 171A of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) for the definition of EIAR. The findings are summarised in the sections that follow.

Population and Human Health

The Proposed Development is not considered to be the type of development that can pose a significant risk to human health. There is the potential for some impacts associated with the construction phase, but these can be managed using appropriate construction methodologies and mitigation as set out in the CEMP prepared by MKO.

Biodiversity

The NIS stated that it can be objectively concluded that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site.

The EcIA concluded that the potential residual impacts on ecological receptors will not be significant and no potential for the Proposed Development to contribute to any cumulative impacts on biodiversity when considered in combination with other plans and projects was identified.

Land, Soil, Water, Air and Climate

Some sections of the site will be excavated as part of the construction works with some disruption to stones, soils, and subsoils. It is proposed to reinstate the site on completion of construction which will include landscape works. A development of this nature will not have any operational impact on land and soils as the general use of the land is not of a project class that has the potential to have significant impacts on land and soils.

Surface waters and groundwaters may be impacted by the proposed construction works through runoff of silt laden surface or pollution events associated with hydrocarbon spillages. Appropriate mitigation has been proposed to counter this and is outlined in the accompanying CEMP.

The construction phase will utilise mechanical excavators and plant. This equipment will potentially use fossil fuels, but the possible impact on air and climate associated with this is imperceptible and will be short-term in nature.

For the operational phase, the Proposed Development is not a recognised emitter of greenhouse gases with the potential to impact climate change.

Material Assets, Cultural Heritage, and the Landscape

The proposed works and in particular, the excavation works have the potential to come into contact and impact previously unidentified underground services should they exist. The same can be said for archaeological features that have previously been undetected. Material assets are also considered in terms of traffic management and impacts associated with the Proposed Development and the existing road network.

The installation of the surface water drainage system will improve surface water quality as the site is currently not serviced for surface water management. In addition, the same can be said for foul water, as it is proposed to install a new foul sewer system around the new storage/plant building and changing room/WC which will then discharge to the existing pump station and then to the existing public sewer north of the site.

The nature of impact associated with landscape is considered in terms of the magnitude of change imposed on the landscape with reference to its key elements, features, and characteristics (also known as ‘landscape receptors’) combined with the sensitivity of the landscape to determine the landscape effect. Potential impacts associated with material assets, cultural heritage and the landscape will be mitigated against by the measures outlined in the CEMP and TTA and other accompanying technical reports.

3.6.3

Description of any Likely Significant Effects

Schedule 7a, Paragraph 3 requires:

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.

Section 3.5.3 above describes the characteristics of the Proposed Development in terms of emissions, waste production and use of natural resources and concludes on the likelihood of significant effects. The findings are summarised in the sections that follow.

Residues and Emissions

Surface water from the proposed buildings, car parks and roads will be first conveyed to 1 of 3 petrol interceptors (Kingspan Klargest bypass interceptor) which include silt traps, and then to 1 of 3 no. attenuation, infiltration, and soakaway systems within the site, with a total capacity of 384.3 m³. It is also proposed to use permeable paving along the quaysides as an additional SuDS measure, allowing surface water to soak directly to ground. There is no requirement for bypass interceptors here as these are for pedestrian use only. Foul water is currently managed by an existing foul water system adjacent to the changing rooms and is pumped to an existing public sewer within the public road to the north of the site. It is proposed to install a new foul sewer system around the new storage/plant building and changing room/WC which will discharge to the existing pump station and then to the existing public sewer north of the site.

Site management measures will be put in place to avoid release of potential pollutants into the existing site network or groundwaters at the site.

There is no real likelihood of significant environmental effects associated with residues and emissions either alone or in cumulation with other existing and permitted projects associated with the Proposed Development.

This is based on a review of the project design, the proposed mitigation measures, the location of the site and the environmental receptors.

Production of Waste

Further information on the production and subsequent recycling/reuse of waste during the construction phase is described in the accompanying CEMP which has been prepared by MKO. There is no real likelihood of significant environmental effects either alone or in cumulation with other permitted and proposed projects related to the production and management of wastes.

Use of Natural Resources

The proposed application site extends to 2.26 ha. The site is a highly modified habitat dominated by buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3), amenity grassland (GA2), and scattered trees and parkland (WD5). There is an existing changing facility present alongside paths and car park areas.

As the description suggests the current land use is not for intensive agricultural purpose therefore agricultural gain is not considered. As regards the proposed land use, sustainable development and achieving the maximum potential of this land resource Section 3.5.1.1 above already alludes to the fact

that the proposal is in line with relevant policies. This is further outlined in the Planning Report prepared by MKO which accompanies this application.

The Proposed Development will require the excavation, temporary storage, and reuse of soil materials in backfilling, site reinstatement and landscaping. The CEMP states that given previous land use and onsite observations, it is expected to be soil and subsoils which will be excavated and reused where possible but if removed from site it will be taken to licensed waste recovery facility.

The use of water resources at the Proposed Development will be restricted to anticipated consumption associated with the changing rooms and bathrooms and other components of the Proposed Development. The site will be supplied by a proposed SUDs and include the attenuations and treatment of surface water prior to discharge. Surface water from the proposed buildings, car parks and roads will be first conveyed to 1 of 3 petrol interceptors (Kingspan Klargester bypass interceptor) which include silt traps, and then to 1 of 3 no. attenuation, infiltration, and soakaway systems within the site, with a total capacity of 384.3m³.

Additionally, it is proposed to install a new foul sewer system around the new storage/plant building and changing room/WC which will discharge to the existing pump station and then to the existing public sewer north of the site.

The Proposed Development has been subject to an EcIA which summarised the potential impact associated with the development concluded that;

'The potential residual impacts on ecological receptors will not be significant and no potential for the Proposed Development to contribute to any cumulative impacts on biodiversity when considered in-combination with other plans and projects was identified.

'Provided that the development is constructed in accordance with the design and best practice that is described within this application, significant effects on biodiversity are not anticipated at any geographic scale.'

3.6.4 **Compilation of Paragraphs 1-3**

Schedule 7a, Paragraph 4 requires:

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

Sections 3.6.1 – 3.6.3 of this document provides information on the Proposed Development, the aspects of the environment which are likely to be significantly affected by the Proposed Development and a description of these effects. A summary of the measures set out to mitigate and ensure that the Proposed Development will not have significant effects on the environment has been provided throughout Sections 3.6.1 – 3.6.3 which is drawn from the information provided in Section 3.5.1 above which was prepared to provide criteria for determining whether a development listed in Part 2 of Schedule 5 (sub-threshold) should be subject to an environmental impact assessment as required by Schedule 7 of the Regulations.

3.6.5 **Summary of Schedule 7a Criteria Assessment**

This section has examined the Proposed Development and whether it would be likely to have significant effects on the environment having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7a of the Regulations. A compilation of the data presented in this report notes the measures set out to mitigate any significant effects and from this it can be concluded that there will be no significant effects on the environment arising from the Proposed Development.

4.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Proposed Development is not a type of development for which an EIA is mandatory.

The relevant legislation requires an EIA for a number of classes of project that could potentially relate to the Proposed Development including:

- *Class 10 (b) (iv) urban development which would involve an area greater than 2 hectares (business district) 10 hectares (built up area) or 20 hectares (elsewhere),*

and also, possibly;

- *Class 15 any sub-threshold project in Schedule 5 Part 2 which does not exceed a quantity, area or other limit specified, but would be likely to have a significant effect on the environment.*

As noted in Section 3.3 above, the Proposed Development is for the construction and operation of an amenity area. It is proposed to improve an existing amenity area on a 2.26 hectare site. This is well below the threshold outlined in Class 10(b)(iv).

An EIA Screening exercise was carried out to determine the potential for the Proposed Development to have significant environmental effects or not in accordance with the provisions of Class 15 of the Regulations for sub-threshold developments. The screening exercise has been completed in this report and the methodology used has been informed by the available guidance and legislation. This exercise has also been informed by a desk study of the site, Construction Environmental Management Plan, Traffic and Transportation Assessment Report, Natura Impact Statement Report, and all other relevant technical reports prepared for the Proposed Development.

This EIA Screening for the Proposed Development has taken into account the scale, location, and nature of the project along with the types and characteristics of potential impacts on the factors specified for environmental impact assessment as set out in the Act. It can be concluded that the Proposed Development, due to the considered design of the project and provided all mitigation measures are properly implemented, that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment. The potential impacts associated with a project of this nature are well established and understood by the authors of this ELASR and the technical reports prepared as part of this application all of whom have provided details of their competency. The impacts are not complex and the proposed mitigation measures are proven and effective. The Proposed Development site location is not considered to be especially sensitive from an environmental perspective and any potential impacts on identified specific sensitive receptors have been mitigated appropriately. Therefore, an EIA is not required for the Proposed Development

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alan Lipscombe (2024) *Traffic and Transport Assessment*
- Cooney McDowall Design Studio Ltd (2024) *Landscape Soft Works*
- EC (2021) *European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations, 1989 to 2001.*
- EC (1985) *European Communities (Conservation of Wild Birds) Regulations, 1985, SI 291/1985 & amendments – <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie>.*
- EC (1992) *Directive 92/43/EEC, Habitats Directive*
- EC (2009) *Directives 2009/147/EC Birds and Habitats*
- EC (2000) *Directive 2000/60/EC, Water Framework Directive;*
- EC (2001) *Directive 2001/42/EC, SEA Directive;*
- EC (2002) *Directive 2002/49/EC, Environmental Noise;*
- EC (2008) *Directive 2008/50/EC, Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe Directive;*
- EC (2007) *Directive 2007/60/EC, Floods Directive;*
- EC (2010) *Directive 2010/75/EU Industrial Emissions Directive*
- EC (2012) *Directive 2012/18/EU Seveso-III Directive*
- EC (2010) *Directive 2010/31/EU, Directive on the Energy Performance of Buildings*
- EC (2008) *Directive 2008/98/EC, EU Waste Framework Directive*
- EC (2012) *Directive 2012/19/EU, Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive*
- EC (1992) *Directive 92/57/EEC on the minimum safety and health requirements at temporary or mobile construction sites*
- EPA (2002) *Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Statements. Environmental Protection Agency.*
- EPA (2003) *Advice Notes on current practice in the preparation of Environmental Impact Statements. Environmental Protection Agency.*
- Hydro Environmental Ltd (2024) *Flood Risk Assessment Report*
- Irish Drilling Ltd (2000) *Site Investigation Report*
- MKO (2024) *Appropriate Assessment Screening Report and Natura Impact Statement*
- MKO (2024) *Construction Environmental Management Plan*
- MKO (2024) *Ecological Impact Assessment*



MKO (2024) *Planning Cover Report*

S. Hanniffy & Associates Consulting Engineers (2024) *Civils Report*