

EIA Screening Report prepared in relation to temporary access/haul road on lands adjoining the Coonagh to Knocklisheen Distributor Road Scheme

Prepared to inform Limerick City and County Council as to the requirement for an
Environmental Impact Assessment Report March 2022

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This report has been prepared by Minogue and Associates with all reasonable skill, care and diligence. Information reported herein is based on the interpretation of data collected and has been accepted in good faith as being accurate and valid.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Project Background

Minogue Environmental Consulting Ltd have been commissioned by MRG Consulting Limited-Roughan O'Donovan JV on behalf of Limerick City and County Council (the Applicant) to undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening exercise in relation to a proposed temporary access/haul road, that will be in operation whilst Ballynanty Bridge is being demolished and re-constructed.

This EIA Screening exercise was undertaken to consider whether EIA is required for the proposed development.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a process undertaken by a competent authority pursuant to its obligations under the EIA Directive on the assessment of the impacts of certain public and private projects on the environment. In accordance with the provisions of Part X of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), an EIA shall be carried out in respect of an application for development which is specified in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended ("the 2001 Regulations").

A mandatory EIA is required for developments which fall within the classes of development prescribed in Schedule 5. In addition, an EIA of "sub-threshold" development may be required, if the competent authority determines that the proposed development would be likely to have significant impacts on the environment. This report documents the methodology employed to complete the screening exercise, having regard to relevant legislation and guidance documents.

Figure 1.1 presents the site location and Figure 1.2 presents the site boundary and proposed temporary haul road.

Figure 1-1 Site Location

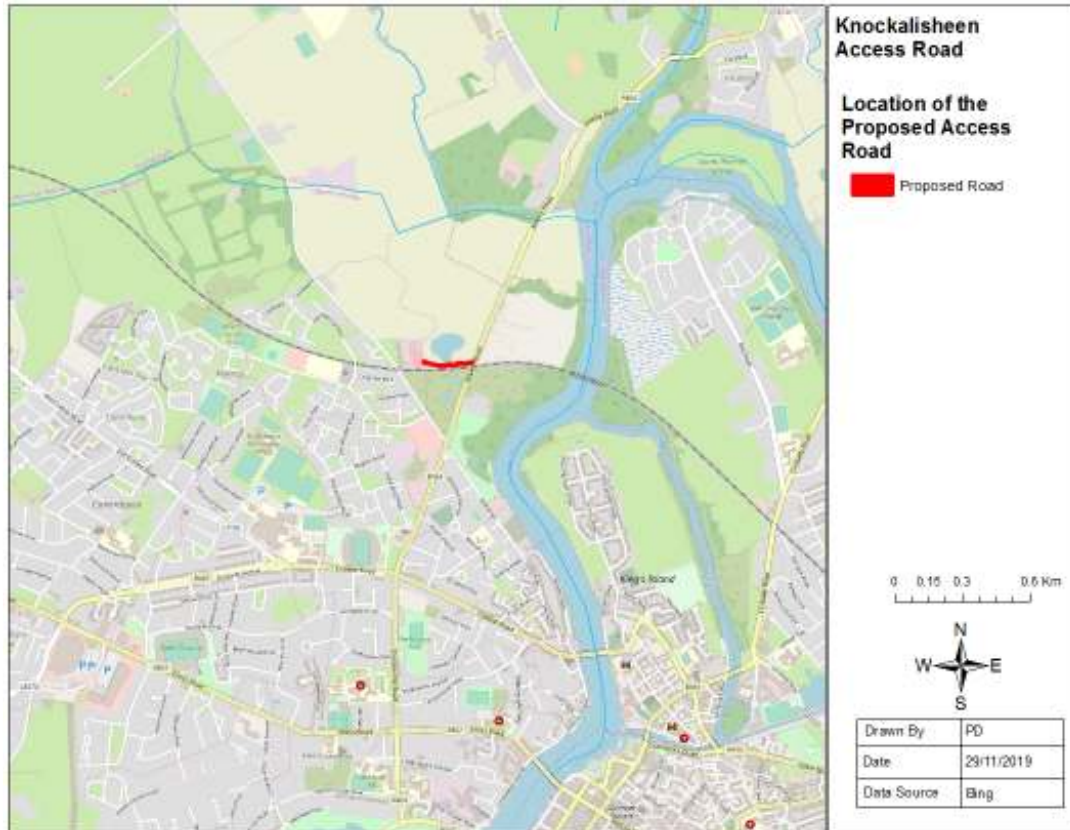


Figure 1-2 Development Boundary and temporary haul road (blue), indicative.



1.2.1 Background to the project

The overall Coonagh to Knocklisheen Distributor Road Scheme which received An Bord Pleanála approval in 2011 is described as follows:

The proposed Coonagh to Knockalisheen Distributor Road scheme will provide a new high quality dual carriageway on the north western outskirts of Limerick City linking Coonagh Roundabout on the N18 with the Knockalisheen Road at a point close to the Limerick Clare county boundary. The total length of new dual carriageway will be approximately 2.6kms. The proposed scheme will also include the following elements from south to north commencing at Coonagh Roundabout:

- *Moyross Link Road: a two way carriageway of approximate length 600metres which will link the new distributor road with the Moyross area. The junction of the link road with the distributor road will be in the form of a roundabout.*
- *Ballygrennan Railway Bridge: new bridge to carry the distributor road across the existing rail line which runs to the north of the Moyross area.*
- *Knockalisheen Road Roundabout: new roundabout at the northern end of the route which will link the distributor road to the Knockalisheen Road.*

Further to the above, the CKDR scheme will also include significant improvement works to the Knockalisheen Road extending from its roundabout intersection with the proposed distributor road over a length of approximately 1.8kms southwards to its junction with the Long Pavement Road at Watch House Cross. These improvement works will primarily involve widening of the existing road to accommodate cycle paths and improved pedestrian facilities but will also include carriageway reconstruction and improvement of existing junctions. A significant element of these works will be the replacement of the bridge where the Knockalisheen Road crosses over the existing railway line at Ballynanty with a new bridge which will facilitate road widening and improved sight lines on its approaches.

An Advanced Works Contract was completed in 2018 which included for the first 300m section of the dual carriageway, a new roundabout at Tesco and the construction of an embankment for a further 650m of future dual carriageway. The Advanced Works Contract also included for site clearance along the route, drainage/ culvert installations, diversion of utilities and fencing/wall construction along the CPO boundary.

The remainder of the CKDR Scheme commenced in March 2021, however the appointed Contractor entered receivership in March 2022. The completion of the CKDR Scheme is now subject to a re-Tender process and will include the following :

2.2km of new urban dual carriageway road with 2 x 7.0m carriageways, footways, cycleways, verges and embankment construction works.

0.6km of new urban single carriageway road with footways, cycleways and verges (Moyross Link Road).

2.0km of major improvements to an existing urban single carriageway road with footways, cycleways and verges (Knockalisheen Road).

1.0km of minor improvements to existing rural single carriageway roads (Cratloe Road).

2 road over railway bridges (New bridge at Ballygrennan and a re-constructed bridge at Ballynanty).

3 new roundabouts (Cratloe Road, Moyross Link Road and Knockalisheen Road Roundabouts).

Associated works will include;

- provision of pedestrian/cyclist crossing facilities in accordance with DMURS;
- diversion of live services including foul sewers, watermains, gasmains and telecomms;
- new surface water sewer systems;
- site clearance and fencing;

-
- masonry and reinforced concrete retaining walls;
 - reinforced earth retaining walls;
 - culverts;
 - road pavements;
 - kerbing, footway/cycleway construction;
 - traffic signs and road markings;
 - road lighting.

The improvement works to Knockalisheen Road are scheduled for the 2nd phase of the CKDR Main Contract works. The 1st phase of the works includes for the completion of the new dual carriageway from Coonagh to Knockalisheen and the new Moyross Link Road and upgrade works to Cratloe Road.

The purpose of this EIA Screening appraisal relates to the proposed temporary access/haul road in the townlands of Allynanty More and Monabraher, Limerick City, hereafter referred to as the proposed development. The lands adjoin the Coonagh to Knockalisheen Distributor Road (CKDR) Scheme which was granted planning approval in 2011 (see above).

The layout of the CKDR Scheme and the proposed development lands to which this EIA screening refers is shown on on Drg. No. 108007-2001 included with the Part 8 Application documents. Figure 1 shows the site location. It is proposed to construct a temporary access/haul road to an industrial/commercial facility located to the north of the Limerick to Ennis railway line off Knockalisheen Road. The estate is noted as the Enterprise Centre on the OS mapping and known locally as the 'High Bays'. The existing Knockalisheen Road is being completely re-constructed from the recently upgraded Watch House Cross junction to a new roundabout intersection with the CKDR. The re-construction of Ballynanty Bridge requires significant works on either approach to the bridge and is likely to require a six-month road closure for a section of Knockalisheen Road.

The access/haul road is temporary and will be in operation whilst Ballynanty Bridge is being demolished and re-constructed. The access/haul road will allow for access from the industrial facility to the R464 Long Pavement (Kileely Road) during the period when Knockalisheen Road will be closed. The access/haul road will also facilitate the movement of construction materials to the bridge re-construction site. It is envisaged that the access/haul road will be required for a period of 18 months. The temporary access/haul road will be approximately 300m in length.

This EIA screening report contains necessary information to enable the competent authority, in this case Limerick City and County Council, to undertake an EIA screening assessment and determine whether an EIA is required to support the proposed development. The findings of the EIA screening assessment are presented in this report and will inform the determination by the local authority in advance of the Part 8 planning consent process.

1.2 Screening

The additional development (project) which is the focus of this EIA Screening report is required in light of the following two objectives:

- to provide a temporary access from the Enterprise Centre to the R464 Kileely Road and
- to allow for haulage of materials from Kileely Road through the Enterprise Centre to the north side of the railway to facilitate the bridge construction works during the period when a section of the Knockalisheen Road will be closed for access.

According to European Commission Guidance (2017¹)

“Screening has to implement the Directive’s overall aim, i.e. to determine if a Project listed in Annex II is likely to have significant effects on the environment and, therefore, be made subject to a requirement for Development Consent and an assessment, with regards to its effects on the environment. At the same time, Screening should ensure that an EIA is carried out only for those Projects for which it is thought that a significant impact on the environment is possible, thereby ensuring a more efficient use of both public and private resources. Hence, Screening has to strike the right balance between the above two objectives.”

The Directive outlines in Article 4 (1) 21 Annex 1 projects that require mandatory EIA. Article 4 (2) outlines Annex 2 projects that require consideration for EIA further to a case by case examination or through thresholds and criteria established by Member States. Projects requiring mandatory EIA are listed in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. Where developments are under the relevant EIA threshold, planning authorities are required under Article 103 of the 2001 Regulations, as amended, to request an EIS where it considers the proposed development is likely to have a significant effect on the environment. In these cases the significant effects of the project are assessed relative to the criteria contained in Schedule 7a of the regulations, principally:

- The projects characteristics
- Sensitivity of the project location, and
- Characterisation of potential impacts.

In addition, where the development would be located on or in an area, site etc. set out in Article 103(2), the planning authority shall decide whether the development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment for such site, area or land etc. the implication being that if it decides that it would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, it can invoke its powers to request an EIS.

This may be considered a sub-threshold EIA development, as EIA is not mandatory for amendments to approved road schemes, such as the Coonagh to Knocklisheen Distributor Road Scheme. The key issue for the competent/consent authority in the context of the possible need for EIA of sub-threshold is whether or not such development is likely to have significant effects on the environment. Consideration of significant effect should not be determined by reference to size only. The nature and location of a project must also be taken into account. This EIA Screening Report is therefore being undertaken to determine in light of the criteria listed in Schedule 7a of the Planning and Development Regulations whether or not this proposed development will require full EIA.

According to the Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (2018):

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

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

¹ Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects Guidance on Screening (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU). European Commission 2017. Page 23.

Where, based on a preliminary examination of the information submitted with the application and any other supplementary information received, the competent authority concludes that, having considered the nature, size and location of the proposed development, there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment, this should be recorded with reasons for this conclusion stated, and no EIA required or formal determination made. The recording of the competent authority's view should be brief and concise, but adequate to inform the public. In many cases this considered view will be included in the planner's/inspector's report on the planning application and this may be cross-referenced in the competent authority's decision. Normally, this will be published at the time of the decision of the competent authority."

One of key amendments introduced by the 2014 EIA Directive includes strengthening of the procedures for screening, particularly through the introduction of new information requirements to be provided by the developer (Annex IIA, and transposed into Irish law by Schedule 7A to the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended) and revised selection criteria to be used by the competent authority in making a determination (Annex III of Directive, Schedule 7 to the 2001 Regulations).

The EIA Directive (2014/52/EU) has brought a number of changes to the EIA process with a strengthening of the Screening process as follows:

- Article 4 (4) of this Directive introduces a new Annex IIA to be used in the case of a request for a screening determination for Annex II projects. This is information to be provided by the developer on the projects listed in Annex II (see below):

1.3.2 Annex IIA: Information to be provided by the developer on the projects listed in Annex II.

1. A description of the project, including in particular:

(a) a description of the physical characteristics of the whole project and, where relevant, of demolition works (**Section 2 of this report**);

(b) a description of the location of the project, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected (**Section 3 of this report**)

2. A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the project (Section 3 of this report)

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

(a) the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant (**Section 4 of this report**);

(b) the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity (**Section 4 of this report**).

4. The criteria of Annex III shall be taken into account, where relevant, when compiling the information in accordance with points 1 to 3 (Section 4 of this report).

Article 4(4) specifies that the developer may provide a description of any features of the project and/or mitigation measures to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant effects on the environment. It should be noted that this does NOT include compensation measures (**Mitigation measures are provided in Section 2.2.**).

1.3.3 Article 4(5) Determination of Screening

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

The determination shall be made available to the public and:

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

The EIA Screening prepared here will inform the competent authority, in this instance Limerick City and County Council on the EIA Screening Determination please see Section 5 of this Report for the EIA Screening Determination as proposed.

1.4 Approach to this EIS Screening

This EIS Screening report has been prepared and informed by the following guidance and guidelines:

- Office of the Planning Regulator Practice Note (OPRN2) Environmental Impact Assessment Screening 2021
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, 2018;
- Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects Guidance on Screening (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU), European Commission, 2017.
- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development, Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2003;
- Guidance on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Statements Environmental Protection Agency 2002, and
- Environmental Impact Assessment (Agriculture) Regulations 2011 Guide for Farmers, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, 2011)

A desktop study of environmental receptors within the project area was undertaken in addition to a site visit by Ruth Minogue MCIEEM on 10th October 2019 and a more detailed walkover by the project ecologist Pat Doherty MSc, MCIEEM on 5th November 2019. An additional site visit was undertaken on 8th February 2022 to assess any changes to the ground conditions by Ruth Minogue MCIEEM.

A review was also undertaken of relevant projects within the project area. The screening for Appropriate Assessment that was prepared as part of the current application has informed this EIA Screening report.

1.5 Statement of Authority

This report has been prepared by Ruth Minogue, MCIEEM. Ruth has been a practicing environmental consultant for 22 years and has specialised in the preparation of Environmental Impact Assessment and

Strategic Environmental Assessment. Additional inputs were provided by Pat Doherty, MCIEEM, an ecologist with 19 years practical experience who has also prepared the Screening Statement in support of Appropriate Assessment, and Eilis Vaughan, who provided the Geographical Information Systems analysis and mapping outputs.

2 Description of the Proposed Development

2.1. Description of Proposed development

The lands are located in Ballynanty More and Monabraher, north of the Limerick to Galway railway line and to the west of the Kileely Road (R464).

The temporary access/haul road will be constructed as works progress on the CKDR Scheme. The access/haul road will be required when the existing Ballynanty rail bridge is being demolished and the subsequent new bridge construction and adjoining sections of road construction are on-going. The Ballynanty rail bridge works are included in Section 2 (Phase 2) of the CKDR Scheme Main Contract and as such will be 12 months or so after the re-commencement of the CKDR Scheme Main Contract which is now to be re-Tendered.

2.1.2 Features of the proposed development

The approach to the road development will be as per the approved CKDR Scheme of 2010, and is not repeated here unless necessary. The features of the development is as follows:

1.1.1.1 Duration of works

The bridge demolition and re-construction will take approximately 6 to 9 months with adjoining road and services construction works along the re-constructed Knockalisheen Road to be carried out within a period of 12 to 18 months overlapping with the bridge works. The temporary access/haul road will then be removed following the re-opening of the improved Knockalisheen Road.

Works to construct the temporary access/haul road would take approximately 6 weeks. It may take 2 to 3 weeks to remove at the conclusion of the project.

1.1.1.2 Approach to Works:

Works to construct the temporary access/haul road would consist of removal of some filled ground and placing a geotextile on an approved road formations a separation layer with imported material to form the road being placed on top. The imported stone material will be placed as capping to the roadway with a sub-base over comprising compartmented class 804 stone and the road construction then completed in a tar and chip temporary surfacing.

Some local levelling will be required at the Long Pavement Road boundary where an earthen mound forms part of the boundary.

A construction compound would be located within the adjoining Enterprise Centre development or directly adjacent the road construction area.

1.1.1.3 Anticipated machinery during works and number of staff working on the project (estimates).

- Two Excavators and four/five tipper trucks to construct the access/haul road.
- One excavator and two dump trucks to remove.

1.1.1.4 Drainage

There is a 'pond' in the vicinity of the works. Following review of OS mapping this pond may have been formed through over-land flows from the Shannon during high tides becoming trapped. In this regard historic mapping shows that the lands were liable to floods. As the Kileely Road and Railway Line was developed open drains which previously drained eastwards towards the Shannon may have been cut off by the embankments constructed to support the road and rail infrastructure. The pond would therefore seem to largely be as a result of the accumulation of water from flood events being unable to drain out of the lands through the blocked drainage pathways and the low-lying nature of the lands.

The lands are shown on CFRAM mapping dated Jun 2016 not at risk of fluvial flood events (refer to Figure 4.10). The lands are shown on CFRAM mapping to be at risk of a 1 in 200-year coastal flood event. . There is also a large watermain running parallel to the proposed road on the railway embankment side with various access covers visible on the ground. There is anecdotal evidence that the watermain has leaked in the past which added to the volume of standing water in the area. The footprint of the proposed road avoids the area of standing water or 'pond'.

3 Receiving Environment

3.1 Introduction

Schedule 6 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended, outline the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by a proposed development. These are:

- Human beings
- Fauna and flora
- Soil
- Water
- Air/climatic factors
- Landscape
- Cultural heritage, including the architectural and archaeological heritage and cultural heritage
- Material assets
- The inter-relationship between the above factors.

3.2 Human Beings – Population and Human Health

The proposed CKDR Scheme is located approximately 3.5km away from the city centre and directly north west of residential communities making up the north side of the city. The townland in the immediate area of the project is Ballygrennan. The immediate area is predominantly urban development in nature with residential housing to the west of the site, a small industrial estate immediately west, and the R434 Long Pavement Road forming the eastern boundary.

The townland is located within the Electoral District of Ballynanty, which had a population of 2,891 according to the 2016 Census data.

1.1.1.5 Health

1.1.1.6 Environmental noise

Environmental noise is from long term or permanent sources, like major transport routes and factories. Noise from these sources has a different effect on people and is managed in a different way. The Environmental Noise Directive was written into Irish law in 2006, through The Environmental Noise Regulations (Statutory Instrument No. 140 of 2006). This law relates to the assessment and management of environmental noise. They provide for a common approach intended to avoid, prevent or reduce the harmful effects, including annoyance, due to exposure to environmental noise. These regulations do not apply to nuisance noise which can be dealt with under the Environmental Protection Agency Act.

The WHO (2011) has identified noise from transport as the second most significant environmental cause of ill health in Western Europe, the first being air pollution from fine particulate matter ([AIRS PO3.1, 2018](#)). Environmental noise exposure can lead to annoyance, stress reactions, sleep disturbance, poor mental health and wellbeing, impaired cognitive function in children, and negative effects on the cardiovascular and metabolic system.

Noise Action Plans are required under the Environmental Noise Directive (EU 2002/49/EC) transposed in to Irish law by SI 140 of 2006. The aim of the Directive and the Regulations is to provide for the implementation of an EC common approach to avoid, prevent or reduce on a prioritised basis the harmful effects, including annoyance, due to exposure to environmental noise. Environmental noise is unwanted or harmful outdoor sound created by human activities, including noise emitted by means of transport, road traffic, rail traffic, air traffic and noise in agglomerations over a specified size. Types of

noise not included in the Regulations are noise that is caused by the exposed person, noise from domestic activities, noise created by neighbours, noise at workplaces or noise inside means of transport or due to military activities in military areas.

1.1.1.7 Interrelationships

There is little local information available in relation to health and population. However, there are strong links between air quality, water quality, material assets and health. Air quality is dependent on a number of factors including the source of potential pollutants and weather conditions. The Air Framework Directive 96/62/EC (CEC, 1996) details how ambient air quality should be monitored assessed and managed. This Directive requires that member states divide their territory into zones for the assessment and management of air quality. Limerick is designated as a Large Town (Zone C) under the Air Quality Index for Health (EPA). The Air Quality Index of health² is based on hourly monitoring data from sites around Ireland and is based on measurements of five air pollutants all of which can harm health. The five pollutants are:

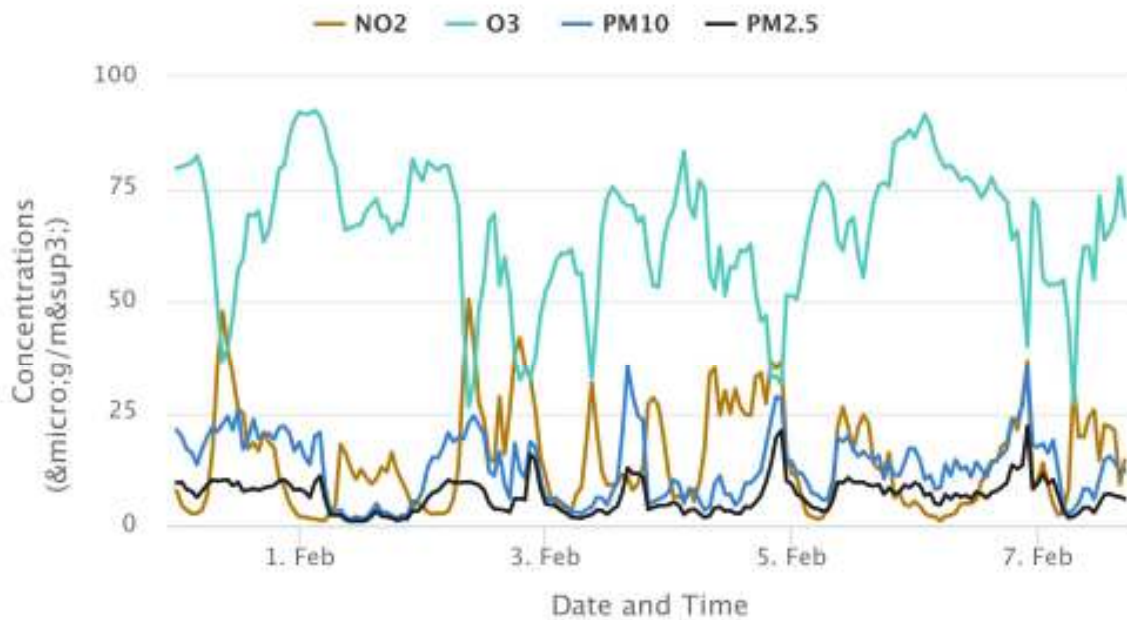
- Ozone gas
- Nitrogen dioxide gas
- Sulphur dioxide gas
- PM2.5 particles and
- PM10 particle

The closest air quality monitoring station to the project site is at Henry Streetk and the graph below shows data from the 1st to 7th February 2022.

²<http://www.epa.ie/air/quality/>

Figure 3-0-1 Air Quality Monitoring Henry Street

Air Quality Levels at Henry Street, Limerick



3.3 Flora and Fauna

3.3.1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment

A screening for Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive has also been prepared for this project proposal and should be read in conjunction with this EIA Screening report. The following European Sites are located within 15km of the project site:

	Site Name	Distance To (m)	Direction To
SAC	002165	Lower River Shannon SAC	77.53m
SAC	001013	Glenomra Wood SAC	8.785km
SAC	002316	Ratty River Cave SAC	12.77km
SAC	000030	Danes Hole, Poulnalecka SAC	12.70km
SPA	004077	River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries	2.153

The Natura 2000 sites listed above are also designated as proposed Natural Heritage Areas. Figures 2 to 4 present the Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and proposed/Natural Heritage Areas within a 15km buffer of the project.

3.3.2 Summary of Habitats Present

The habitats present within the footprint of the project site are representative of dry neutral and grassy verge grassland habitat and scrub.

A summary of a habitats from the 2010 EIS is as follows and applies to the area immediately surrounding the development site:

Section 7.2.2 General Description of the Study Area

The majority of the route from Coonagh to Knockalisheen runs at the western fringe of sub-urban Limerick crossing low-lying land of neglected pasture (a mosaic of species-poor wet grassland and dry neutral grassland) with occasional scrubby hedgerows. North-east of the Limerick to Ennis rail line, the topography is more undulating as the route enters an area of smaller fields separated by tree-lines and dense hedgerows north of Castle Park Estate before joining the Knockalisheen Road.

The scheme also involves the upgrade of the Knockalisheen Road as far as Watchhouse Cross. This stretch of road is uniformly low-lying and is partially bordered to the east by Knockalisheen Marsh (a proposed Natural Heritage Area and part of the Lower River Shannon candidate Special Area of Conservation), while the wooded grounds of the derelict Castle Park Estate, a protected structure, fringe the western side of the road. A small block of wetland, also within the Lower River Shannon candidate Special Area of Conservation, occurs immediately north of Watchhouse Cross.

[page 7/4] Hedgerows and Treelines

In the section between Coonagh and the rail line (chainage 0 to 1, 880), field boundaries are primarily low scrubby hedgerows (WL1) comprised of willow, hawthorn, and blackthorn with abundant briar. Elder and ash are both occasional as small trees. The ground flora is typically poorly developed due to the dense nature of the hedgerow.

Protected Species Records

A search of the NBDC 2km grid (R55u) recorded the following protected species within 2km of the project site.

Table 1 Protected Species 2km Grid R55u (National Biodiversity Ireland Database, accessed 07.02.2022)

Species	Nu	Date of record	
Black-headed Gull (<i>Larus ridibundus</i>)	2	23/08/2013	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Red List
Common Kingfisher (<i>Alcedo atthis</i>)	1	31/12/2011	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex I Bird Species Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Common Starling (<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>)	2	23/08/2013	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Eurasian Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>)	2	26/02/2013	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Eurasian Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>)	1	31/12/2011	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section I Bird Species Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex III, Section II Bird Species Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List

Species	Nu	Date of record	
Goosander (Mergus merganser)	1	31/12/2011	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section II Bird Species Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Great Cormorant (Phalacrocorax carbo)	3	09/04/2016	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Lesser Black-backed Gull (Larus fuscus)	1	23/08/2013	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Little Grebe (Tachybaptus ruficollis)	1	31/12/2011	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Mallard (Anas platyrhynchos)	2	31/12/2011	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section I Bird Species Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex III, Section I Bird Species
Mute Swan (Cygnus olor)	1	31/12/2011	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List

Species	Nu	Date of record	
Rock Pigeon (<i>Columba livia</i>)	2	23/08/2013	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section I Bird Species
Tufted Duck (<i>Aythya fuligula</i>)	1	31/12/2011	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section I Bird Species Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex III, Section II Bird Species Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Triangular Club-rush (<i>Schoenoplectus triqueter</i>)	1	31/12/1999	Threatened Species: Endangered
Hill Cuckoo Bee (<i>Bombus (Psithyrus) rupestris</i>)	1	31/12/1895	Threatened Species: Endangered

Figure 3.2 Special Areas of Conservation 15km of Proposed Development

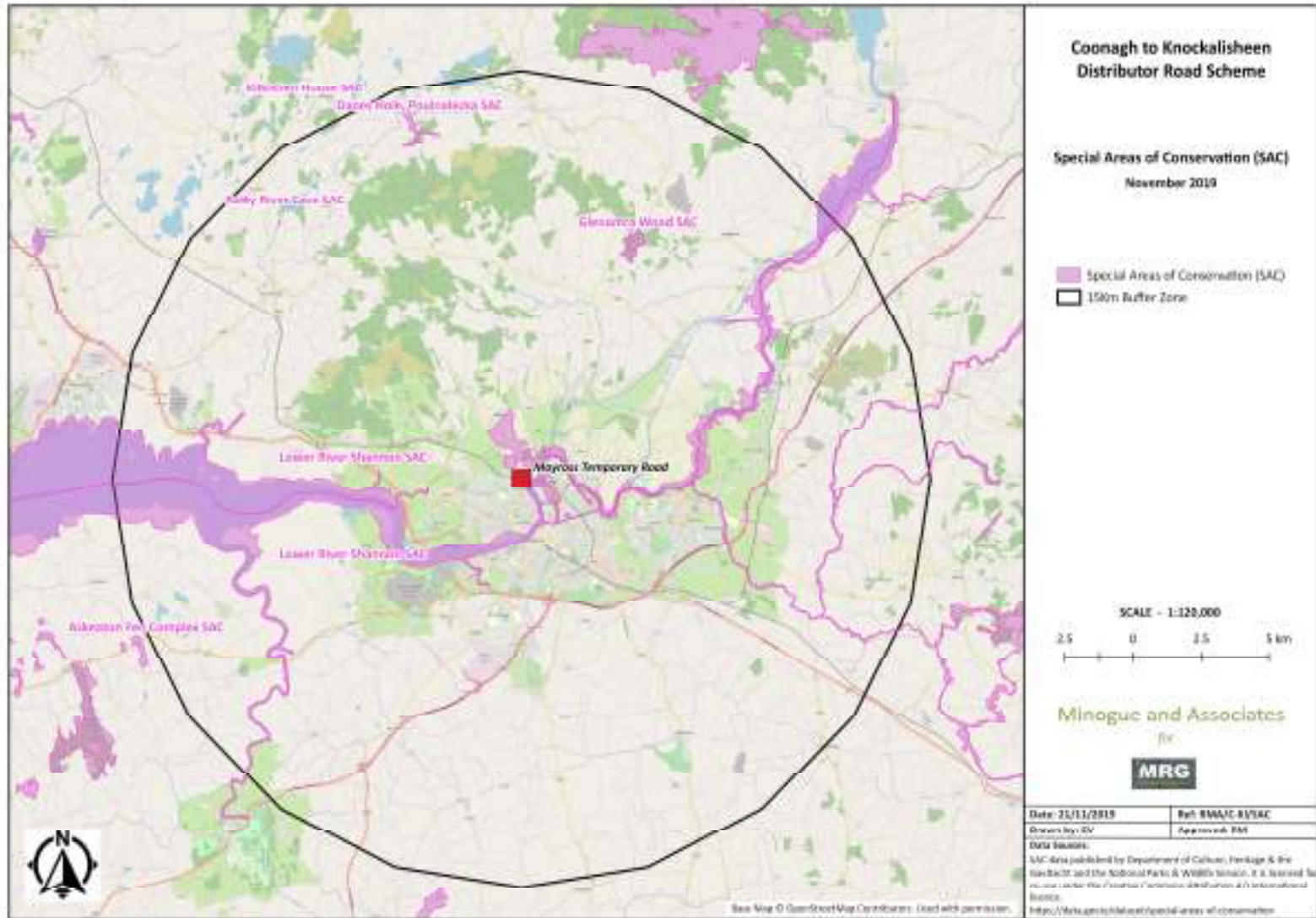


Figure 3.3 Special Protection Area 15km of Proposed Development

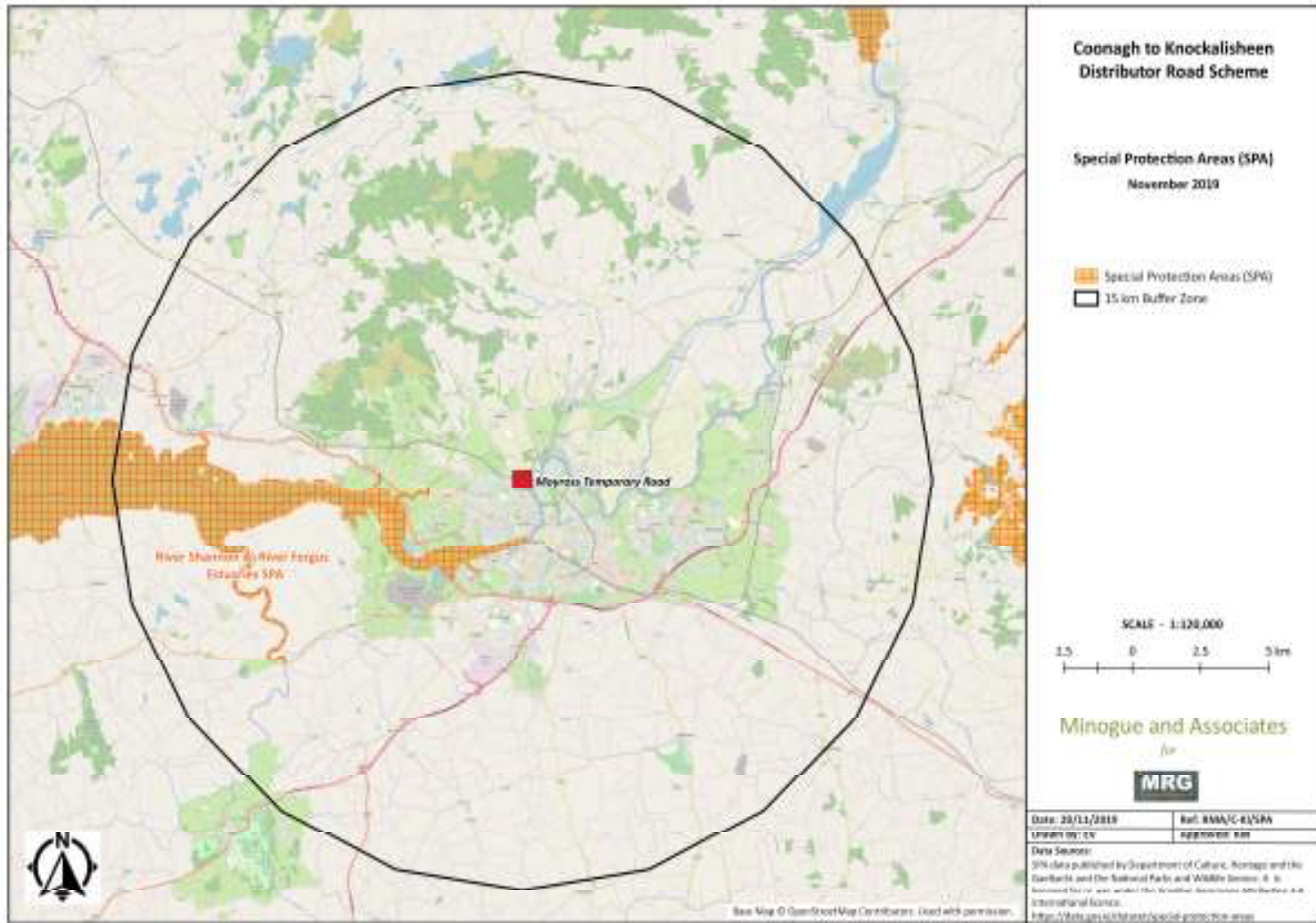
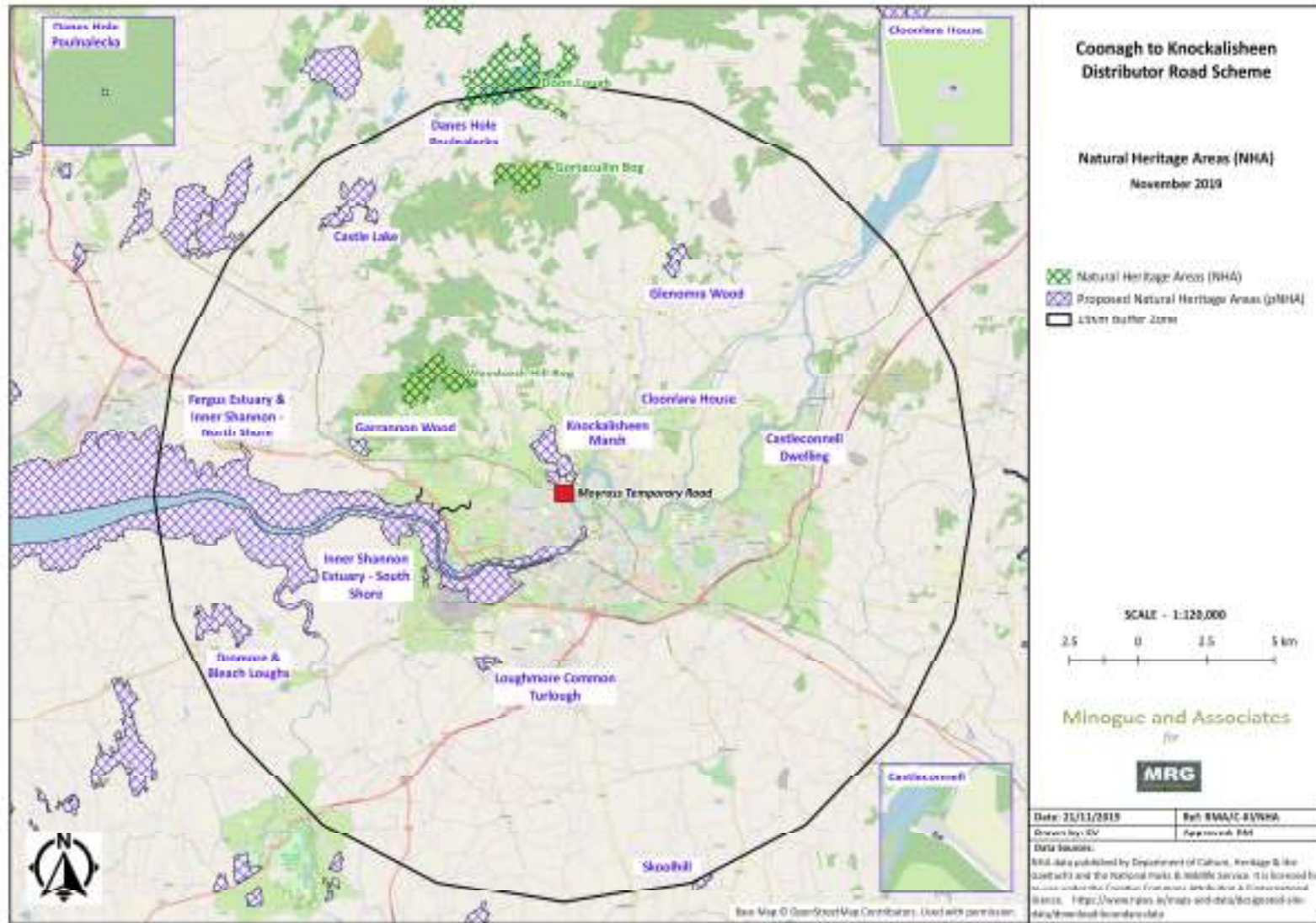


Figure 3.5 Natural Heritage Areas 15km of Proposed Development



3.4 Geology and Soil

The proposed haul route is located in an area that has been identified by the Geological Survey of Ireland as being underlain by estuarine silts and clay and of low groundwater permeability. Given the underlying subsoils at the project site and the low permeability, which is evident on the ground by the presence of the pond to the north of the project site it is concluded that there is no potential for a groundwater pathway to connect the project to the Lower River Shannon SAC and the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA further downstream. Please see figures below

Figure 3.6 Bedrock Geology and Project

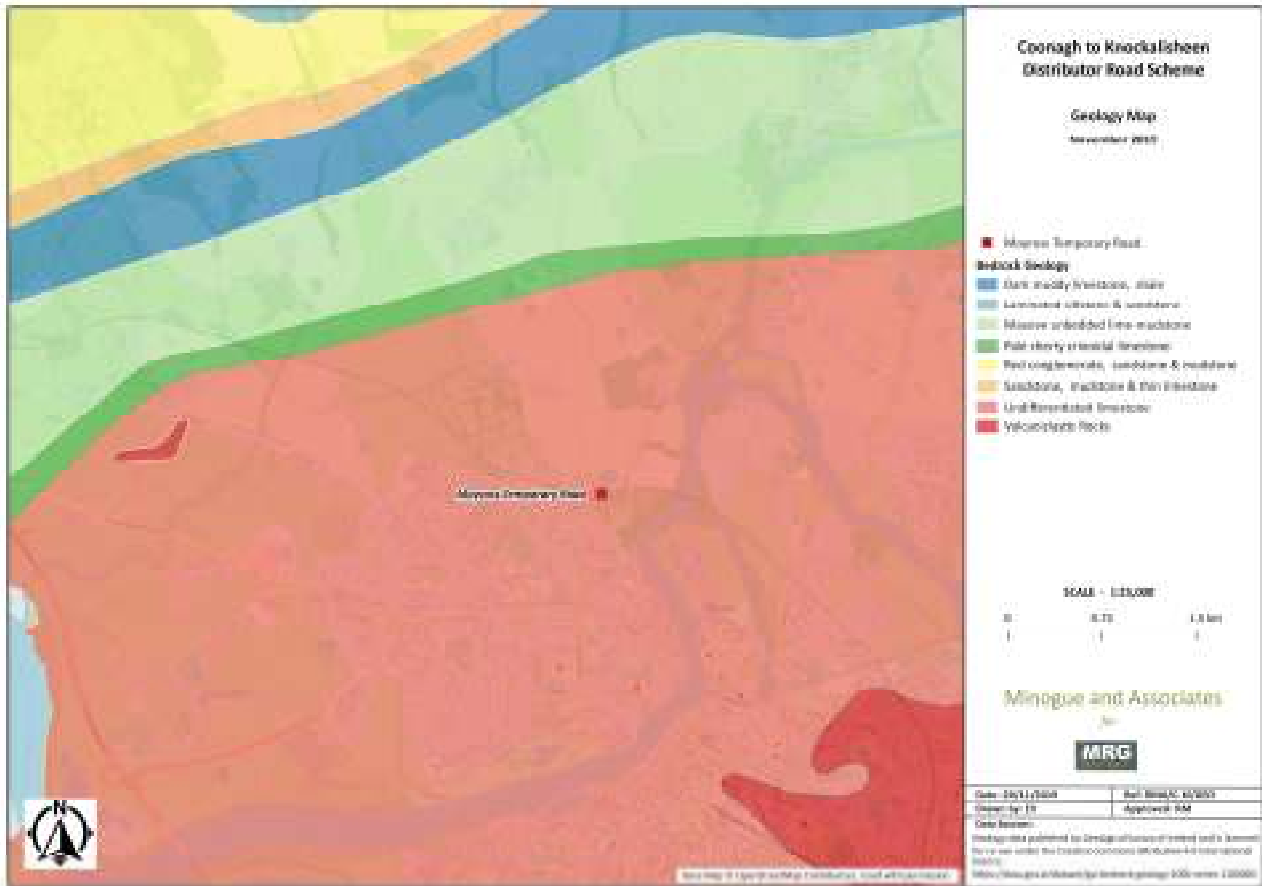
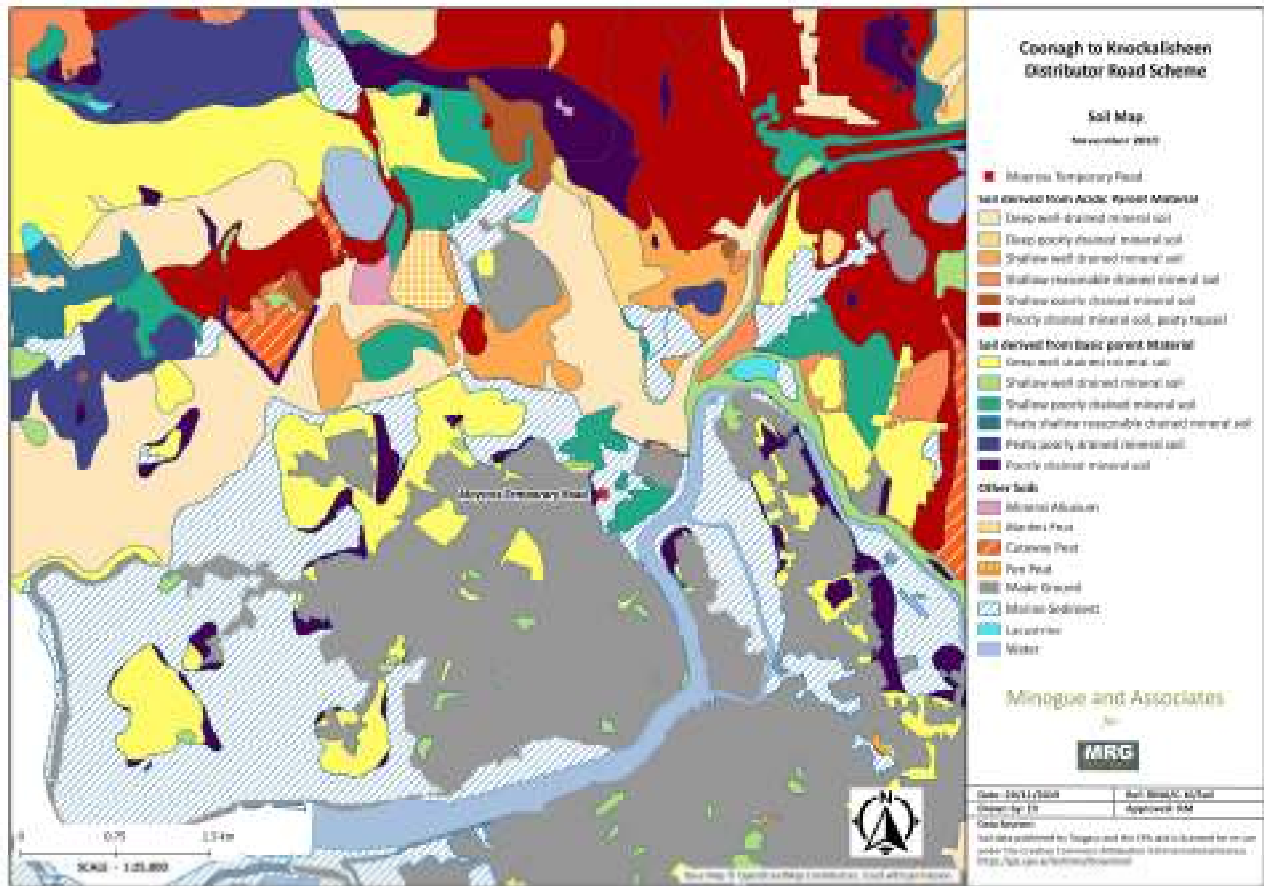


Figure 3.7 Soil map and project site



3.5 Water

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) is a key initiative aimed at improving water quality throughout the EU. It applies to rivers, lakes, groundwater, estuarine and coastal waters. The Directive requires an integrated approach to managing water quality on a river basin basis; with the aim of maintaining and improving water quality. The catchments-based approach is now embedded in the WFD Programme for River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018 – 2021. A catchment is an area where water is collected by the natural landscape and flows from source through river, lakes and groundwater to the sea. The study area lands are situated within the Shannon Estuary North (code:27) and the sub catchment of Shannon Lower (Code sc 100)

3.5.1 Surface water

Surface water status is classified under the WFD from 'high' to 'bad' status. In measuring this status both ecological and chemical parameters are measured and the overall status is determined by the lower threshold achieved for both ecological and chemical parameters. The closest surface water feature is the North Ballycannon stream, which flows northeast of the site before entering the River Shannon. This is unassigned any water quality status. This river flows west before turning south to join the River Shannon further downstream.

There is also pond (also unassigned) in the vicinity of the works. The figure below presents surface water quality and Figure 8 shows surface water flow directions.

Figure 3.8 Flow Direction of surface water (source: EPA AA mapping)



3.5.2 Groundwater

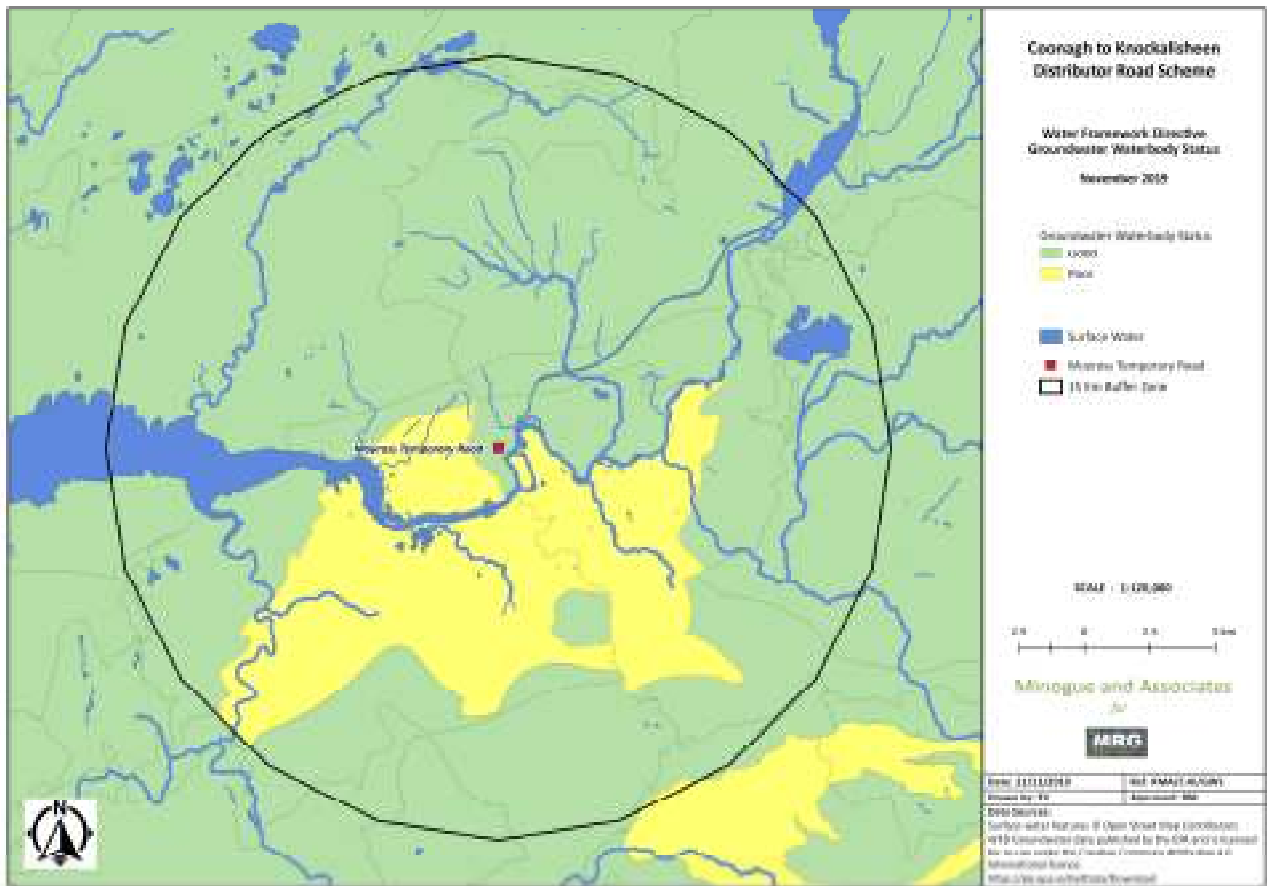
Groundwater is a further significant resource and refers to water stored underground in saturated rock, sand, gravel, and soil. Surface and groundwater functions are closely related and form part of the hydrological cycle. The protection of groundwater from land uses is a critical consideration and groundwater vulnerability is becoming an important management tool. The entire island of Ireland has been designated as a Protected Area for Groundwater under the WFD. Groundwater is important as a drinking water supply as well as the supply to surface waters. In addition, groundwater supplies surface waters. Groundwater is exposed to higher concentrations of pollutants that are retained in the layers of rock and soil. The exposure to pollutants lasts much longer as groundwater moves at a slower pace through the aquifer. The quality of our drinking water supply, fisheries and terrestrial based habitats is intrinsically linked with groundwater quality. The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) aquifer categories are based on their vulnerability to pollution, i.e. the ease at which it can enter the subsurface layers. The classification of extreme or high vulnerability means that the groundwater in these areas is very vulnerable to contamination due to hydrogeological and soil factors.

The Geological Survey of Ireland's Groundwater Vulnerability Mapping shows the groundwater vulnerability for the study area within a catchment where groundwater vulnerability is considered moderate or low, with an area further east identified as medium vulnerability, please see Figure 10. Groundwater overall is identified as being of good status according to the WFD classification as shown in Figure 9

(<https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/AAGeoTool>).

As stated above in Section 3.4 given the underlying subsoils at the project site and the low permeability, which is evident on the ground by the presence of the pond to the north of the project site it is concluded that there is no potential for a groundwater pathway to connect the project to the Lower River Shannon SAC and the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA further downstream.

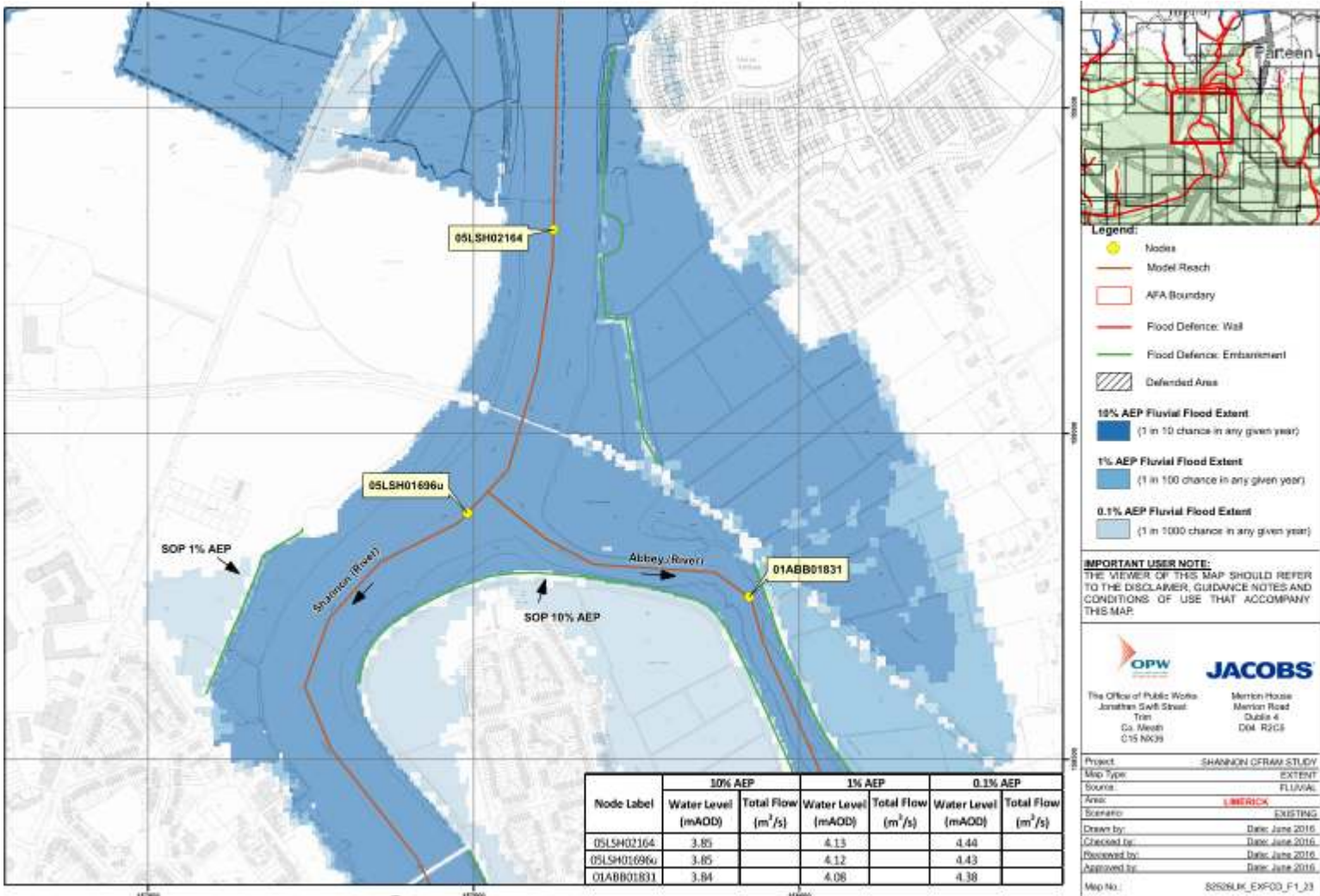
Figure 3.9 Groundwater Quality



3.5.3 Flooding

The Planning System and Flood Risk Management, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2009, issued by the DoEHLG and undertaken in conjunction with the OPW, requires Planning Authorities to prepare a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). The primary purpose of the SFRA is to determine flood risk within a particular geographical area. It should be noted the SFRA is an ever-evolving document, which is to be reviewed and updated on a regular basis in the light of emerging information, flood data and an improved understanding of flood risk. Figure 4.10 below shows flood risk extents published by the OPW as part of the Shannon CFram Study.

Figure 4.10 Flood Risk



3.6 Air and Climatic Factors

All developments, agriculture, energy generation, industry and commercial activity and waste generation contribute emissions to air and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions; however the emission of pollutants from vehicles is one of the main threats to air quality in Ireland and contributes significantly to the increase of greenhouse gases. The latest annual report on Air Quality in Ireland 2014 (EPA 2014) states that overall air quality in the country is good. Measured values of sulphur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), carbon monoxide (CO), Ozone (O₃), particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}), heavy metals, benzene and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) were all below limit and target values set out in the CAFE Directive and 4th Daughter Directive. However, when some of these parameters are compared to the tighter WHO Air Quality Guideline values, it highlights some potential issues. Ireland is above these guideline values with respect to PM₁₀, PM_{2.5}, ozone and PAH.

The primary sources of pollutants are traffic (source of nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter), and domestic solid fuel use (particulate matter). Longer term encouraging a modal shift from cars to walking and cycling will benefit local air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transport at a local scale.

3.7 Landscape

The landscape in the project area is largely flat and low-lying and becomes more undulating north of the railway line. Chapter Eight of the EIS for the original road scheme describes the area as follows:

Although the Shannon River lies only 1-2 km away to the east, it has little physical presence within the study area. The Crompaun River (Meelick Creek) forms the western boundary of the study area and part of the county boundary between Clare and Limerick. The area is generally flat, low-lying and prone to flooding in places, with the patchwork field boundaries providing a network of drainage ditches with small hedgerows. Further west and north the land in Co Clare rises towards Woodcock Hill and Ballycarr South.

Field Boundaries and Vegetation

The field pattern is generally a function of the drainage system required due to the low-lying nature of the land so close to the Shannon estuary. Small hedgerows are generally associated with the ditches forming parallel channels along rectangular shaped fields. More tree cover is found in association with houses and gardens particularly in the north of the study area culminating in the high quality demesne landscape and woodlands associated with Castle Park House and Delmege Estate.

3.8 Cultural Heritage

The project area does not have any recorded cultural heritage features, such as archaeological features, record of protected structure features or architectural conservation areas. See the figure below.

Archaeology and Architectural heritage



3.9 Material Assets

The Longpavement Road (R464) is the primary road relevant to the project area; whilst the Limerick – Galway Railway line runs north of the project area.

There are no proposals to provide toilets or water supply as part of the proposed project works associated with the temporary road.

3.10 Inter-relationship between parameters

The primary inter relationships identified for this project relate to water resources and biodiversity. As there are no surface water links from the site to the Lower River Shannon SAC and combined with the small and local scale of the amendments, no significant inter-relationship is identified.

3.11. Environmental Protection Measures

In addition to the relevant mitigation measures provided in the consented road scheme as presented in Chapter 13 of the Environmental Impact Statement (now referred to Environmental Impact Assessment Report). The following will apply:

A temporary berm will be constructed on the southern side of the access/haul road where the development adjoins the existing drainage channel located alongside the railway embankment. Interceptor ditches are to be

constructed either side of the access/haul road to collect runoff from the road. The ditches are to be collected to a silt trap prior to discharge to the open drain.

- The Contract Documents for the temporary access/haul road construction will include for the following:

The Contractor will establish and implement, during the execution and completion of the Works, an Environmental Operating Plan consistent with and analogous to the NRA “Guidelines for the Creation, Implementation and Maintenance of an Environmental Operating Plan”. All construction and operations shall be carried out in accordance with the Control of Water Pollution from Linear Construction Projects, Technical Guidance (C648) (CIRIA 2006), Control of Water Pollution from Linear Construction Projects, Site Guide (C649) (CIRIA 2006), and in accordance with Guidelines for the Crossing of Watercourses during the Construction of National Road Schemes (NRA, 2006).

3.12 Best Practice Construction Approach

As noted above the Contractor will establish and implement, during the execution and completion of the Works, an Environmental Operating Plan consistent with and analogous to the NRA “Guidelines for the Creation, Implementation and Maintenance of an Environmental Operating Plan”.

All construction works, relating to the activities and construction sequence outlined in Section 2.1 above, will be undertaken in accordance with the following:

- Inland Fisheries Ireland’s *Requirements for the Protection of Fisheries Habitat during Construction and Development Works*.
- CIRIA (Construction Industry Research and Information Association) Guidance Documents
 - Control of water pollution from construction sites (C532)
 - Control of water pollution from linear construction projects: Technical Guidance (C648)
 - Control of water pollution from linear construction projects: Site Guide (C649)
 - Environmental Good Practice on Site (C692)
- TII Guidance Documents
 - Guidelines for the Crossing of Watercourses during the Construction of National Road Schemes
 - Guidelines for the Management of Noxious Weeds and Non-Native Invasive Plant Species on National Roads
 - Guidelines for the Protection and Preservation of Trees, Hedgerows and Scrub Prior to, during and Post Construction of National Road Schemes.

All work completed to be in compliance with the Wildlife Acts, 1976 – 2012;

In areas where Annex II-listed species (e.g. Badgers) or Flora Protection Order species are known to occur the works shall be carried out under licence from the NPWS.

3.13 Earthworks

The temporary access/haul road earthworks operations will involve the excavation and transportation of some excavated cut material along the route of the road with some of the excavated material then being used as fill to form protective berms. Earthworks on the project site will then comprise :

- Construction of protective berms to the side of the road;
- Excavation and infilling carried out in small progressive stages;
- No significant run-off of silt laden run-off is anticipated, given the proposed construction methodology, the site will be regularly monitored by construction staff for signs of run-off such as silt in surrounding vegetation and measures will be put in place to prevent this where necessary. This may include the provision of a solid containment berm (of soil) or alternatively the erection of a silt fence. A silt fence may be constructed by attaching a sheet of geotextile membrane to a stock fence and burying the bottom of it into the ground, thus allowing water to pass through but not the heavier fraction of the sediment;
- In all circumstances, excavation depths and volumes will be minimised and excavated material will be re-used where possible.

3.14 Fuel Use and Storage

The use of machinery at the site carries the potential for accidental hydrocarbon contamination of the area, by fuel spillages or oil leaks for example. The works will be carried out in accordance with the following measures to avoid such impacts:

- Mobile storage such as fuel bowsers will be bunded to 110% capacity to prevent spills. Tanks for bowsers and generators shall be double skinned.
- When not in use, all valves and fuel trigger guns from fuel storage containers will be locked.
- All plant refuelling will take place on site using mobile fuel bowsers. Only dedicated trained and competent personnel will carry out refuelling operations.
- Plant refuelling will take place as far as practicable from watercourses located. A spill kit and drip tray shall be on site at all times and available for all refuelling operations. Equipment shall not be left unattended during refuelling.
- All pipework from containers to pump nozzles will have anti siphon valves fitted.
- Strict procedures for plant inspection, maintenance and repairs shall be detailed in the contractor's method statements and machinery shall be checked for leaks before arrival on site.

-
- 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.
 - Care will be taken at all times to avoid contamination of the environment with contaminants other than hydrocarbons, such as uncured concrete or other chemicals.
 - The plant refuelling procedures described above shall be detailed in the contractor's method statements.

3.15 Measures to Protect Water Quality & Surface Water Bodies

- Temporary berm or silt fencing to prevent the ingress of any surface water or dust emissions to watercourses during the construction phase, an impermeable barrier will be placed either side of the access/haul road with a silt trap being installed where water drains to the existing open drain.
- Suitable prevention measures will be put in place at all times to prevent the release of sediment to other drainage channels associated with construction areas and migration to adjacent watercourses.
- To reduce erosion and silt-laden runoff, the creation, where possible, of natural vegetation buffers between the construction footprint and the other drainage channels and divert runoff from exposed excavated areas will be undertaken.
- Disturbance to natural drainage features will be avoided during the construction and/or maintenance of the proposed access/haul road.
- Excavated material will not be stored immediately adjacent to watercourses.
- Any refuelling or lubrication of machinery will not be undertaken within 50m of a watercourse.

3.16 Non-Native Invasive Species

Giant Hogweed is recorded on the lands, therefore the following will apply:

- Any vegetation clearance or construction works to be undertaken in the vicinity of areas identified as supporting non-native species will be undertaken in accordance with the Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) (formerly the National Roads Authority (NRA)) guidance measures for the control and management of noxious weeds and non-native invasive species (see NRA, 2010). Sites of known infestation shall be clearly marked prior to works and avoided during construction. The importance of preventing the spread of these species will form part of a tool box talk to all personnel prior to construction commencing.
- Sites of known infestation shall be clearly marked prior to works and avoided during construction. The importance of preventing the spread of these species will form part of a tool box talk to all personnel prior to construction stage.

-
- All contractors should incorporate strict biosecurity protocols into their Construction Environmental Management Plans. These protocols to include the thorough cleaning and disinfection of all machinery prior to arrival and departure from the site, to prevent the spread of invasive species.

4 EIA Screening

4.1 Legislative background

EIA requirements derive from EU Directive 85/337/EEC (as amended by Directive 97/11/EC, Directive 2014/52/EU and S.I. 454 of 2011; S.I. 464 of 2011; S.I. 456 of 2011 and S.I. No 296 of 2018) on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment. The purpose of this Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report is to determine whether this proposed development will require full Environmental Impact Assessment. The new 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 EIA to be carried out prior to a decision on a development consent application being made.

In order to ensure compliance, by Limerick City and County Council in making its EIA screening determination, with the requirements of the 2001 Regulations, this EIA screening report contains four distinct elements:

- (a) a statement of all the relevant matters (i.e., the information specified in Schedule 7A and any further information on the characteristics of the proposed development and its likely significant effects on the environment);
- (b) identification of the relevant assessments that are available ;
- (c) identification of the results of those assessments; and
- (d) identification of how those results have been taken into account.

This EIA screening statement should be read in conjunction with other application documents including the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report. Article 4(4) of the Directive 2014/52/EU introduces a new Annex IIA to be used in the case of screening determinations.

As referenced above, Schedule 7 to the 2001 Regulations details the criteria Limerick City & County Council, as competent planning authority, must consider in determining whether an sub-threshold EIA should be carried out in respect of “sub-threshold” development. Schedule 7 to the 2001 Regulations comprises a direct transposition of Annex III to the EIA Directive, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU.

As further referenced above, the 2014 EIA Directive introduces a new Annex IIA (which is transposed into Irish planning law as Schedule 7A to the 2001 Regulations) to be used by competent authorities carrying out EIA screening determinations. Schedule 7A requires that the following information be provided by a developer in respect of projects listed in Annex II:

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.

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 project on the environment resulting from:

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

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

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

4.2 Methodology and Guidance

According to European Commission Guidance (2017)

“Screening has to implement the Directive’s overall aim, i.e. to determine if a Project listed in Annex II is likely to have significant effects on the environment and, therefore, be made subject to a requirement for Development Consent and an assessment, with regards to its effects on the environment. At the same time, Screening should ensure that an EIA is carried out only for those Projects for which it is thought that a significant impact on the environment is possible, thereby ensuring a more efficient use of both public and private resources. Hence, Screening has to strike the right balance between the above two objectives.”

According to the Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (2018):

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

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

Where, based on a preliminary examination of the information submitted with the application and any other supplementary information received, the competent authority concludes that, having considered the nature, size and location of the proposed development, there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment, this should be recorded with reasons for this conclusion stated, and no EIA required or formal determination made. The recording of the competent authority’s view should be brief and concise, but adequate to inform the public. In many cases this considered view will be included in the planner’s/inspector’s report on the planning


application and this may be cross-referenced in the competent authority's decision. Normally, this will be published at the time of the decision of the competent authority."

A methodology was developed to formally screen the proposed development, which was based on the recent 2017 European Commission EIA Screening Guidance referenced above, and the 2018 Guidance issued by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government and 2021 Office of Planning Regulator Advice Note.

For the reasons set out in detail in this EIA Screening report, it is concluded that there is a no real likelihood of significant effects of the environment, in which case Limerick City and County Council is invited to determine that EIA is not required.

4.3 Projects for Cumulative Assessment

The proposed development was considered in combination with other projects in the area that could result in cumulative effects on the environment. A search of planning applications was consulted on 28th February 2022 for the subject lands and immediate surrounds in particular development applications adjacent to the site. Table 4.1 lists the projects that have been identified during this search and provides an assessment of the potential for the proposed project to combine with these other projects to result in cumulative significant effects to the environment. Figure 4.1 present all planning applications within the vicinity of the subject lands identified on myplan.ie

	
<p>REF:211658, Knockalisheen Road, Ballynanty More, Moyross, Limerick (Planning Granted)</p>	<p>A development which will consist of (A) Construction of a single storey discount foodstore (to include off-licence use) with a gross floor area of c. 1,820 sqm (net retail area 1,315 sq.m.); B)</p>

	<i>New vehicular/pedestrian access from Knockalisheen Road (including connection for proposed future access to adjoining lands); C) 98 no. car parking spaces and 10 no. bicycle spaces; D) Erection of 2 no. internally illuminated, double sided, free standing, identification signs located adjacent to the proposed vehicular/pedestrian access to the site and at the entrance to the carpark; 2 no. single sided internally illuminated gable signs, 1 no. single-sided window sign at entrance door; E) 88sqm of solar panels provided at roof level; F) All Landscaping/lighting, boundary treatment, engineering and site development works (including a single storey ESB substation and switch room c. 35sqm and a deposit return scheme unit c. 62sqm). A Natura Impact Statement will be submitted to the planning authority with the application</i>
<i>REF:201026, 11 Hartigan Villas, Moyross, Limerick (Planning Granted)</i>	<i>The construction of an extension to existing dwelling house including all ancillary site works</i>
<i>REF:198003, Dalgaish Park, Moyross, Limerick (Part 8 Planning Granted)</i>	<i>The demolition of 10 one storey single dwellings, construction of 27 residential units consisting of 2 x 2 bed apartments, 4 x 2 bed duplexes and 3 x 3 bed houses in a three-storey arrangement, and 5 x 2 bed apartments, 3 x 4 bed houses and 10 x 3 bed houses and in two-storey arrangements, vehicular and pedestrian access, roads, footpaths and 40 x car parking spaces, open space and soft landscaping to public and private amenity spaces, homezone and landscaped areas, boundary works including reconstruction and new boundaries, alteration & construction of new infrastructure and all associated site works</i>
<i>REF:158003, Cosgrave Park, Moyross (Part 8 Planning Granted)</i>	<i>(1) the provision of 50 no. residential units including 27 no. houses and 23 no. apartments. (2) demolition of numbers 83 and 84 Cosgrave Park and the existing depot building, (3) realignment of Moyross Avenue, (4) upgrading and re-routing of foul sewers and surface water drainage, (5) provision of 2 no. attenuation tanks, (6) provision of new remodelled areas of public open space and (7) all associated site works</i>
<i>REF:18364, Watch House Cross Shopping Centre Car Park, Moyross, Limerick (Planning Granted)</i>	<i>A pay-to-use waste portable compactor for dry recyclables and a pay-to-use portable waste compactor for residual waste and food waste</i>
<i>REF:17403, Unit 1 Watch House Cross, Limerick (Planning Granted)</i>	<i>Consists of an amendment to the previously approved planning application reference 17/2 comprising the omission of the proposed subdivision of ground floor retail units B&C to form a single retail unit and associated elevational changes/site works</i>
<i>The proposed works have been assessed cumulatively within this Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report and by DEC Ltd within the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report and concludes that potential cumulative effects are limited. The assessment outlined above has found that the proposal relating to the construction of the proposed temporary access/haul will not have</i>	

the potential to combine with any other existing and/or approved projects to result in likely significant impacts on the environment	
(h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.	Measures are detailed in Section 2 and are derived from best practice guidelines in addition to the Mitigation Measures in the consented scheme of 2010 as listed in Chapter 13 of the EIA and conditions applied by An Bord Pleanala.

Conclusion: No significant effects likely to arise associated with the characteristics of the potential impacts.

Rationale: Minor, localised and temporary impacts are identified associated with this project which represents an amendment to the approved project which was subject to full EIA and Habitats Directive Assessment.

4.4 Assessment

Having considered the above environmental factors the aim of the next section is to address likely impacts on the environment by the implementation of the proposed development. Whether an EIA would be deemed relevant to the scale of the project and the environment will then be determined. The following sections presents the EIA Screening Report based on the criteria contained in Schedule 7 of S.I. 296 of 2018 and are grouped under the following headings.

1. Characteristics of the Proposed Development - *Table 4.1*
2. Location of the Proposed Development - *Table 4.2* and
3. Characteristics of Potential Impact - *Tables 4.3* and *4.4*

Table 4.1 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

Screening Question	Response
1. Characteristics of projects	The characteristics of projects must be considered, with particular regard to:
(a) the size and design of the whole project	The project relates to the temporary provision of a temporary access/haul road to facilitate access to a local industrial estate and access during bridge works associated with the CKDR scheme. It is of temporary construction, and approximately 300m in length. The size and design of the temporary road is small in scale and design. Of itself the project is not identified as giving rise to significant environmental effects.
(b) cumulation with other existing and/or approved projects;	The proposed development was considered in combination with other projects in the area that could result in cumulative effects on the environment. Mitigation Measures are outlined in the consented scheme in addition to those identified in Section 3.11 -3.16 of this EIA Screening report will provide effective management of the project and will eliminate the potential for interactive

Screening Question	Response
1. Characteristics of projects The characteristics of projects must be considered, with particular regard to:	
	effects to result in likely significant effects on the environment.
(c) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;	<p>Limited natural resources will be used in terms of the overall road construction.</p> <p>Measures as presented in Chapter 13 of the EIA of the consented scheme will apply in relation to all environmental parameters as well as application of measures as outlined in Section 2 of this EIA Screening Report.</p> <p>The size and design of the whole project do not result in likely significant effects on the environment.</p> <p>Given the above approaches the project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment.</p>
(d) the production of waste;	Yes, but not significant. Likely significant effects on the environment are not identified.
(e) pollution and nuisances;	<p>The construction phase presents the greatest risk of pollution to water resources, and disturbance/damage to flora and fauna. Potential sources of water pollution to both surface and groundwater include fuel, lubricants, suspended solids and asphalt. Silt-laden surface runoff could arise during construction. The provision of silt barrier during the construction is a principal mitigation measure.</p> <p>Potential pollution to water resources from operation include increased surface run off containing suspended solids associated with traffic is not identified as a risk associated with this project.</p> <p>However, best practice in design, construction and operation will be implemented and adherence to Environmental Construction Guidelines will be implemented. Additional measures have also been integrated in relation to the surface water quality, please see Section 3.12 Best Practice Construction Approach.</p> <p>In addition, noise disturbance during construction may impact on bird species associated with the hedgerows or wet grassland, again this project in and of itself is not identified</p>

Screening Question	Response
1. Characteristics of projects	The characteristics of projects must be considered, with particular regard to:
	as generating significant noise levels over and above those identified in the EIA for the road scheme. Given the above approach likely significant effects on the environment are not identified.
(f) the risk of major accidents and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge;	The risks of major accidents are not considered to be significant subject to best construction practices being followed through the construction phase. This will include proper site management, maintenance and operation of all machinery and works associated with the construction phase, on site safety and training.
(g) the risks to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution).	As above, significant risks to human health are not identified for this proposal. The environmental protection measures, particularly for the construction phase are detailed in Section 2 and subject to full and proper implementation, potential risks associated with construction activity will not arise. The presence of Giant Hogweed close to the subject lands represents a risk, in the absence of mitigation but Section 2 again provides measures in relation to same to avoid risks to human health from accidental contact with Giant Hogweed. Given the above approaches the project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment
Will the proposed development create a significant amount of nuisance during its construction or operation?	It is not anticipated that significant noise levels will arise during construction (they will be temporary and restricted to machinery) and the road will be removed once the construction works are completed. Given the above approaches the project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment

Conclusion: No significant effects likely to arise associated with the characteristics of the proposed development.

Rationale: The works associated with the project site are small in nature and duration, do not present significant effects to environmental parameters and are temporary in nature.

Detailed measures as presented in Section 3, will ensure that subject to full implementation and adherence to same the project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment.

Table 4.2 Location of the Proposed Development

Screening Question	Response
<p>The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by projects must be considered, with particular regard to:</p> <p>(a) the existing and approved land use;</p>	<p>The area likely to be affected comprises grassland with an adjacent pond thought to be associated with overflow associated with Longpavement Road and pluvial sources.</p> <p>This is primarily an urban area comprising residential, industrial and transport uses.</p>
<p>(b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground</p>	<p>The works relate to provision of temporary road as part of the works and will be removed once the scheme is completed. The works do not result in likely significant effects on the environment.</p>
<p>(c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:</p> <p>(i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;</p> <p>(ii) coastal zones and the marine environment;</p> <p>(iii) mountain and forest areas;</p> <p>(iv) nature reserves and parks;</p> <p>(v) areas classified or protected under national legislation; Natura 2000 areas designated by Member States pursuant to Directive 92/43/EEC and Directive 2009/147/EC;</p>	<p>The proposed development of itself is not predicted to result in changes to the patterns of surface water runoff that currently exist.</p> <p>Measures in the consented scheme, as well as works undertaken by the OPW in relation to flood management will contribute to alterations to surface water run off, once the scheme is constructed in line with the approval process.</p> <p>(i) the pond outside the project site is not identified as being impacted during the construction or operation of works.</p> <p>(ii) not applicable, given the scale, nature and remote distance of the project site from coastal zones.</p> <p>(iii) not applicable</p> <p>(iv) not applicable</p> <p>(v) The Screening Statement for Appropriate Assessment that accompanies this report has assessed the likely significant effects of the proposal on the conservation management objectives of European Sites within a 15km buffer of the route and determined a finding of no likely significant effects.</p> <p>Given the above approaches the project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment</p>
<p>(vi) areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards, laid down in Union legislation and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure;</p>	<p>Whilst surface water quality within the wider area is variable, there are no direct or indirect effects identified for the project and potential risks to these surface waters. The greatest risk would relate to the construction phase and detailed measures in Section 2 will apply.</p> <p>Measures included in the overall scheme and as outlined above are not identified as generating additional pressure on the groundwater quality which is good within this area.</p>

Screening Question	Response
	Given the above approaches the project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment.
(vii) densely populated areas;	The route traverses the fringe of urban areas of Limerick. No negative effects are identified in relation to this criterion; positive effects relating to increased recreational use are identified.
(viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance	No architectural conservation areas are listed within or adjoining this area and the archaeological record shows features some distance from the project site. Given the above approaches the project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment

Conclusion: No significant effects likely to arise associated with the location of the proposed development.

Rationale: Works relate to provision of a temporary road for the duration of the works. Mitigation measures as presented in Section 2 will apply in addition to the wider mitigation measures for the CKDR Scheme. The works as proposed in this development are considered to result in minor to negligible temporary impacts in terms of loss of wet grassland.

The screening process assesses the most significant potential impacts in relation to the themes outlined below in Table 4.3 below. These are considered as follows:

Type and characteristics of the potential impact.

The likely significant effects of projects on the environment must be considered in relation to criteria set out in points 1 and 2 of this Annex, with regard to the impact of the project on the factors specified in Article 3(1), taking into account:

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

Table 4.3- Characteristics of Potential Impacts on environmental parameters

Environmental Topic	Potential Impact
Human Beings	<p>Potential temporary negative impacts to residents associated with construction works; as part of the overall scheme. In and of itself, the effects of this particular project element are identified as minor, and the provision of a temporary road is positive for workers and visitors to the industrial estate.</p> <p>The project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment</p>
Flora and Fauna	<p>Temporary impacts associated with construction and no longer term operational impacts associated with this temporary road are identified. Invasive species recorded such as Giant Hogweed is key so risk of spreading of same is a key issue. Biosecurity measures are provided for and presented in Section 2 of this screening report; subject to full adherence to same this impact is avoided.</p> <p>Potential water quality impacts</p> <p>The construction phase represents the greatest potential risk to water quality and flora and fauna, and measures applied in Section 3 will reduce this risk and provide good practice in construction. Given the approach outlined in Section 3, the project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment.</p>

Environmental Topic	Potential Impact
	<p>The following is the conclusion of the AA Screening report provided under separate cover:</p> <p><i>“Two European Sites, the Lower River Shannon SAC and the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA, were identified as occurring in the wider area surrounding the project site. the Lower River Shannon SAC is located immediately to the south of the project site, while the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA is located over 2km to the south. The potential emissions that could be generated by the project have been considered in the screening report and the potential for emission pathways to connect the project to the Lower River Shannon SAC and the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA have been examined. This examination has found that these emission pathways will not have the potential to function as impact pathways connecting the project to the Lower River Shannon SAC and the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA. Given the absence of impact pathways between the project and these European Sites there will be no potential for the project to result in likely significant effects to these European Sites and their conservation objectives. It is noted that a suite of best practice measures will be implemented as part of the project to minimise the impact of the project to the local environment. These measures are detailed in full in the EIA Screening Report that has been prepared for the project and is presented under separate cover. While the implementation of these measures will mitigate the potential for impacts to the local receiving environment, it is noted that such measures have not been relied upon to inform the findings of this screening report and the potential for the project to result in likely significant effects to European Sites. In light of the findings of this report it is the considered view of the authors of this Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment that it can be concluded by Limerick City & County Council that the project is not likely, alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, to have a significant effect on any European Sites in view of their Conservation Objectives and on the basis of best scientific evidence and there is no reasonable scientific doubt as to that conclusion.”</i></p>
Soil and Geology	<p>Permanent and minor negative impact related to works phase, particularly in relation to areas requiring minor excavation works. The project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment.</p>

Environmental Topic	Potential Impact
Water	Potential exists for alterations to hydrology which may impact upon watercourses and other water based habitats such as the wet grassland although given the approach to Best Practice Construction it is considered sufficient safeguards are included in this approach. If not mitigated, surface water quality impacts arising from the construction stage could arise. Given the approach outlined in Section 2, the project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment
Air Quality and climate	Localised impacts arising from machinery such as excavators. Emissions during works phase will be minimized through best practice. Traffic emissions are not considered likely to be significantly increased and reuse within the overall project is positive in terms of reducing trips associated with disposal off site. The project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment.
Noise and Vibration	Noise during the construction phase may result in nuisance however; noise and vibration during works phase will be minimized through best practice. Traffic noise and vibration are not considered likely to be significantly increased as a result. The project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment.
Cultural Heritage	None identified; The project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment.
Landscape	No significant alteration of landscape character in and of itself. The project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment.
Interrelationship between above parameters	The key interrelationship arises between water quality and habitats in particular. Given the approach outlined in Section 3, the project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment.

Conclusion: No significant effects likely to arise associated with the potential impacts on environmental parameters.

Rationale: As the preceding table shows, potential impacts relate primarily to temporary impacts at construction stage and the implementation of the Best Practice Construction measures will provide safeguards to avoid significant impacts at this stage; to avoid ingress of surface water or dust emissions over watercourses, temporary silt trap and impermeable barrier will be installed as appropriate.

Table 4.4 Characteristics of the potential impacts

Characteristics of potential impacts	
The potential significant effects of proposed development in relation to criteria set out under Tables 4.3. and 4.2 above, and having regard in particular to:	
(a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical	Minor and localized temporary impacts are identified primarily at construction stage only.

area and size of the population likely to be affected);	The geographic area of the proposed works are confined to the immediate site area. Accordingly, there is no significant impact associated with the operational phase of the development
(b) the nature of the impact;	Impacts are identified as temporary as they relate to the construction stage and sufficient and detailed measures as shown in section 2.
(c) the transboundary nature of the impact;	Potential transfrontier impacts could arise in the event of pollution to surface waters associated with the project; dependant on significance, duration and magnitude of such an event.
(d) the intensity and complexity of the impact;	Whilst best practice guidelines and adherence to statutory requirements will address and mitigate for several environmental parameters during the design, construction and operation process; the principal potential impacts relate to water quality, and its subsequent impact on species dependent on water quality of the aquatic habitats therein. The proposed works will be carried out in line with environmentally sensitive construction methodologies therefore no significant impacts will arise
(e) the probability of the impact;	The design of the proposals, best practice construction reduces and mitigates against significant effects arising, particularly in relation to the construction stage which is identified as giving rise to the greatest risk.
(f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact;	Subject to implementation and adherence to measures in Section 2, impacts identified for topics are not significant and will be temporary and reversible in nature, as they relate to construction phase only, anticipated to be approximately 30 months associated with the larger construction activities of the CKDR Scheme.
(g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved projects;	Cumulative Effects with Existing and/or Approved Projects A search of the Myplan.ie on-line planning portal was completed on identify any existing or approved projects (i.e. within the last five years) in the vicinity of the proposed project or along the river upstream of the project site.
The proposed works have been assessed cumulatively within this Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report and by DEC Ltd within the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report and concludes that potential cumulative effects are limited. The assessment outlined above has found that the proposal relating to the provision of a temporary road as part of the Coonagh to Knockalisheen Distributor Road EIA consented in 2010 will not have the potential to combine with any other existing and/or approved projects to result in likely significant impacts on the environment	
(h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.	Measures are detailed in Section 2 and are derived from best practice guidelines in addition to the Mitigation Measures in the consented scheme of 2010 as listed in Chapter 13 of the EIA and conditions applied by An Bord Pleanala.

Conclusion: No significant effects likely to arise associated with the characteristics of the potential impacts.

Rationale: Minor, localised and temporary impacts are identified associated with this project which represents an amendment to the approved project which was subject to full EIA and Habitats Directive Assessment.

4.5 IDENTIFICATION OF THE RELEVANT ASSESSMENTS AVAILABLE

In consideration of a recent high court case (Waltham Abbey Residents Association v. An Bord Pleanala & ORS), the following statement was made:

“The kind of assessments that should be brought together in the statement under 299B(1)(b)(ii)(II)(C) include those under the following directives:

- (i) directive 92/43/EEC, the habitats directive: see EC EIA, Guidance on Screening, 2017, p. 44;
- (ii) directive 2000/60/EC, the water framework directive: see EC EIA, Guidance on Screening, 2017, p. 44;
- (iii) directive 2001/42/EC, the SEA directive: see EC EIA, Guidance on Screening, 2017, p. 44;
- (iv) directive 2002/49/EC, regarding environmental noise;
- (v) directive 2008/50/EC, the clean air for Europe directive;
- (vi) directive 2007/60/EC, regarding the assessment and management of flood risks; as well of course as
- (vii) any other relevant provision of EU law.”

For this EIA Screening Report, the following sources are pertinent:

- (i) Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028,
- (ii) Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Limerick City and County Development Plan 2022-2028,
- (iii) Appropriate Assessment Natura Impact Statement for the Limerick City and County Development Plan 2022-2028

4.5.1 RESULTS OF RELEVANT AVAILABLE ASSESSMENTS AND CONSIDERATION OF RESULTS

There is no specific discussion relating to the proposed temporary haul road in the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028, SEA ER and NIR. The current Limerick City Development Plan 2022-2028 references the Northern Distributor Road which is proposed north of the project site;

Limerick Northern Distributor Road:

It is an objective of Limerick City & County Council to:

a) support the Limerick Northern Distributor Road, which will connect the Coonagh to Knockalisheen Road Scheme to the existing R445 (old N7) and adjoining road network to the east of Limerick City which will incorporate Smarter Travel measures in accordance with all environmental and planning assessments.

b) ensure the LNDR will be subject to the Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines and its implementation will not support any significant development along the route, subject to any strategic and/or national considerations.

As this project relates to a temporary haul road that is more appropriately considered under the Coonagh Knockalishen Scheme there is no relevant mitigation measures identified through the Limerick City and County Development Plans, SEA or AA process other than existing environmental protection measures particularly as they relate to transport.. in this regard, mitigation measures as appropriate from the CKDR scheme EIAR and AA should apply as relevant and appropriate

5 Conclusion

5.1 Screening Determination

This Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report appraisal has been prepared, and it could be concluded at the preliminary stage, that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment. Accordingly, in circumstances where there is no significant and realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effect, this EIA Screening report has been prepared and submitted to enable Limerick City and County Council, as competent authority, to determine whether there is a real likelihood of significant effects on the environment, in which case, an EIA would be required.

For the reasons set out in detail in this EIA Screening report, it is concluded that there is a no real likelihood of significant effects of the environment, in which case Limerick City and County Council is invited to determine that EIA is not required.

In coming to this conclusion, with which Limerick City & County Council is invited to agree in making its EIA screening determination, the consultants engaged by Limerick City & County Council have considered all the matters, including:

- the criteria set out in Schedule 7 to the 2001 Regulations;
- information specified in Schedule 7A to the 2001 Regulations;
- further relevant information on the characteristics of the proposed environment and its likely effects on the environment, including
 - o where relevant, information on how the available results of other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment carried out pursuant to European Union legislation other than the EIA Directive have been taken into account; and
- description of the features of the proposed development and measures envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment of the development.

The information provided in this EIA Screening Report can be used by the competent authority, Limerick City & County Council to conclude and determine that an EIA is not required for the proposed development relating to the proposed development as there will be no significant effects.

The overall conclusion for this screening appraisal is that, having considered the appropriate criteria, Environmental Impact Assessment for the project is not required

