



EIA SCREENING REPORT

Play Area Southill, Limerick City

Prepared for Limerick City and County Council

MEC Ltd.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Project Background

Minogue Environmental Consulting Ltd was engaged by Feeney McMahon Architects Ltd Ltd on behalf of Limerick City and County Council (LCCC) to undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report for a proposed play area at Southill, Limerick City. Figure 1.1. shows the project location and boundary over aerial imagery.

FIGURE 1-1 PROJECT LOCATION AND BOUNDARY



1.2 Legislative Background

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a procedure undertaken by a competent authority pursuant to its obligations under the EIA Directive the terms of European Directives 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 remit of Schedule 5.

In addition, an EIA of “sub-threshold” development EIA may be required, if the competent Planning Authority determines that the proposed development would be likely to have significant impacts on the environment. Schedule 7 of the Regulations details the criteria for determining whether a

development would or would not be likely to have significant impacts on the environment considering the characteristics of the proposed development, its location and characteristics of potential impacts.

Thus, Article 93 of, and Schedule 5 to, Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended (“the 2000 Regulations”) sets out the classes of development for which a planning application must be accompanied by an environmental impact assessment report (EIAR). Part 1 and Part 2 Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 prescribes the categories of, and thresholds for, prescribed development requiring EIA.

1.2.1 Project Type and thresholds

Schedule 5 Part 1 of the 2001 Regulations is aligned with Annex I of the EIA Directive and identifies those developments for which EIA and the submission of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) is mandatory. This schedule lists a range of development activities including major infrastructure projects such as airports, motorways or power stations. The proposed development does not fall within any of the classes of prescribed development contained in Part 1 of Schedule 5.

Schedule 5 Part 2 of the 2001 Regulations is aligned with Annex II of the EIA Directive and lists the type of development that may require an EIA. This depends on site area, and quantum of development in relation to thresholds listed and therefore if there is potential for likely significant environmental effects.

Paragraph 10(b) of Part 2 of Schedule 5 contains the following prescribed development:

“b) (i) Construction of more than 500 dwellings

(ii) Construction of a car-park providing more than 400 spaces, other than a car-park provided as part of, and incidental to the primary purpose of, a development.

(iii) Construction of a shopping centre with a gross floor space exceeding 10,000 square metres.

(iv) Urban development which would involve an area greater than 2 hectares in the case of a business district, 10 hectares in the case of other parts of a built-up area and 20 hectares elsewhere.

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

In this regard, the relevant category for the play area project at Southill would be “urban development” listed in Schedule 5 Part 2, 10b, iv. European Commission (2015) guidance provides information on the interpretation of definitions of project categories and details potential project types that would meet the definition of ‘urban development’. These are as follows:

- Projects with similar characteristics to shopping centres and car parks, such as bus garages, train depots;
- Construction projects such as housing development; concert halls; cultural venues;
- Projects to which the term ‘urban’ and ‘infrastructure’ may relate such as construction of sewerage and water supply networks.

The proposed public realm improvement works do not correspond or have similar characteristics to any of the suggested project definitions and would therefore not be considered under the ‘urban development’ criteria of Schedule 5 Part 2.

Furthermore, the thresholds for EIA for this project category are listed as development in a business district with a site area over 2 hectares, in a built-up area with a site area of over 10 hectares and

elsewhere with a site area over 20 hectares. The project footprint is considerably under these thresholds amount to 1090m² ~0.109ha.

For the purposes of EIA, the 2001 Regulations define 'business district' as a district within a city or town in which the predominant land use is retail or commercial use. A review of current landuse based on the landuse zoning of the Limerick City Plan area, a review of google aerial imagery and site visit on 19th May 2023 show that the immediate project area comprises community and social uses with religious, educational and health facilities surrounding the project site. The northwest of the site comprises residential uses. It does not correspond to a 'business district; for the purposes of EIA, and more accurately corresponds to a Built Up area.

In summary, the project does not correspond to 'urban development' project definition following European Commission guidance, nor does it meet the threshold for EIA in this project category, being an area of 0.109ha with a mandatory EIA threshold of 10ha in this category.

In relation to criteria applied for mandatory EIA development as listed in Section 50 of the Roads Act 1993, the project does not meet the criteria for EIA given the scale, and nature of the proposed works, relating to play area provision. In light of this, the project does not meet the criteria for such works under the Roads Act 1993, as amended.

However, notwithstanding that the proposed development is "sub threshold", as set out in the *Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment* (August 2018), screening is the initial stage in the EIA process and determines 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.

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).

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."

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

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

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."

For the avoidance of doubt, Section 3 of this report, provides an assessment of the project against Schedule 7 criteria of the EIA regulation to which sub threshold development is required to be assessed. Section 4 provides the EIA Screening Determination.

1.3 Screening

1.3.1 Changes to the EIA Screening Process

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):

Annex II: 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 2.1 Project Description**);

(b) a description of the location of the project, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected (**Section 2.2 Receiving Environment**)

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 3 EIA Screening**) ;

(b) the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity (**Section 3 EIA Screening**).

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 3 EIA Screening**).

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.

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 Cork County Council, the EIA Screening Determination please see Section 4 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:

- Practice Note on EIA – Office of Planning Regulator, 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.
- Interpretation of definitions of project categories of annex I and II of the EIA Directive, 2015.
- 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.

1.5 Statement of Authority

This report has been prepared by Ruth Minogue, MCIEEM. Ruth has been a practicing environmental consultant for 24 years and has specialised in the area of environmental assessment including Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment. She holds an Advanced Diploma in Planning and Environmental Law (2017, Kings Inn) as well as ongoing CPD through professional institutes including the Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management, the Irish Landscape Institute and is currently undertaking a course on Nature Based Solutions for Water and Land management at Cranfield University.

Additional inputs were provided by Eilis Vaughan MSc, who provided the Geographical Information Systems analysis and mapping outputs. Site visits were carried out in 12th May 2023 to inform the assessment process.

2 Description of the Proposed Development

2.1 Site Description

The project is located in the area of Southill, Limerick City and the project footprint is approximately 0.109ha. The site is surrounded by community and social use including a health centre, school and church, whilst residential use is to the northwest of the site.

2.2 Project Description

Summary of works is as follows:

- Remove topsoil across the site.
- Create low level earth mounds and prepare ground where equipment / natural features are to be introduced.
- Re-plant grass across 2 zones of the site (Surface area of 2 zones = 529 sqm).
- Plant hedging to the south-west edge of the site & along the boundary with the church fence (east edge of site).
- Prepare 1 zone of the site to be partially re-planted with grass while a compacted mulch is to be introduced around play equipment in this zone (Surface area of Play Equipment Zone: 295 sqm).
- Introduce path through the site (Surface area of Path = 154 sqm).
- Create a paved area in the north-east corner of the site by the church gates (Surface area of Paved Zone = 112 sqm).
- Transport all equipment / natural features and place them / fit them on site.

2.3 Receiving Environment

2.3.1 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

Table 2.1 presents a summary of existing environmental baseline under the above topics and Figures 2.1 onwards present baseline maps for the project site and surrounding area.

2.4 Summary of Environmental Baseline

TABLE 2-1 SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE

EIA topic	Summary
Human Being	The project is within Southill which is located in the southern city suburbs. The site is located within the Galvone B Electoral District and small area 128020003. Population of the Electoral District (2016 Census) is 664 persons. The HP Deprivation index (2016) was -28.13. The area is located within one of the Limerick Regeneration Areas.
Fauna and Flora	The project site is located within an area of amenity grassland and is surrounded on all sites by Built Land and Artificial Surfaces. There are no European sites within or directly adjacent to the boundaries of the proposed development site. The closest European site to the proposed development is Lower River Shannon SAC located at approximately 2.34km from the project site. No protected flora or fauna were recorded within 1km of the project site (National Biodiversity Ireland Tetrad R5855).
Water Resources	No surface water features, or open drains are present on the project site. The study area lands are situated within the Lower Shannon catchment (code:25) and the sub catchment of Shannon Lower (SC090). The nearest surface water features are the Ballnaclough (010) river south of the site approximately 1.46 km in distance; this river is classified as being of moderate water quality.
Soil and Geology	The underlying bedrock geology is limestone and the soils are classified as made ground or 'urban'.
Landscape and townscape	The project site is largely surrounded by 20 th century buildings and the distinctive bell tower of the Holy Family Church.
Air and Climatic Factors	The latest Air Quality at the closest air quality monitoring site is at the People's Park and recorded 'good' as of 21 st April 2023. The monitor measures particulate matter (PM) which is commonly used as an indicator of dust particles in air, including total suspended particulates, PM10, PM2.5 and PM1
Cultural heritage	No archaeological sites or protected structures are in or adjacent to the project site; the nearest structure on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage is Southill House and Park, west of the project site

Material Assets

The nearest public transport service is on Castle Oak View served by the 303 bus route. No drinking water or wastewater is associated with the project.

FIGURE 2-1 SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION AND SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS 15KM

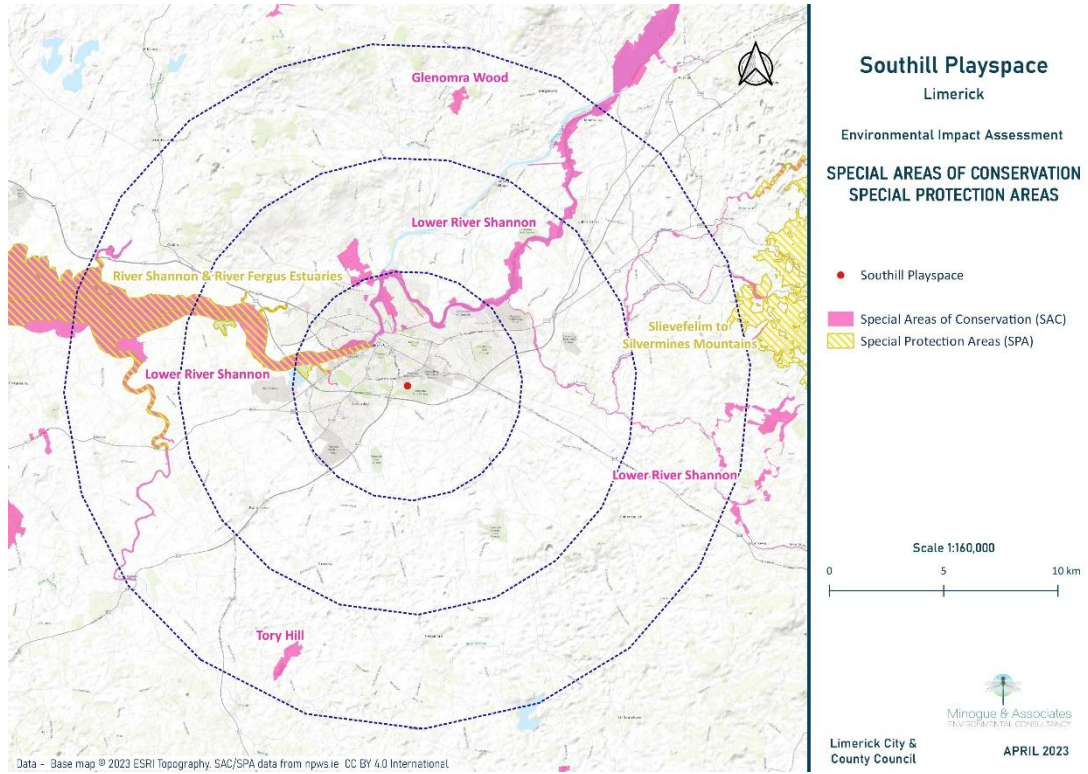


FIGURE 2-2 NATURAL HERITAGE AREAS AND PROPOSED NATURAL HERITAGE AREAS 15KM

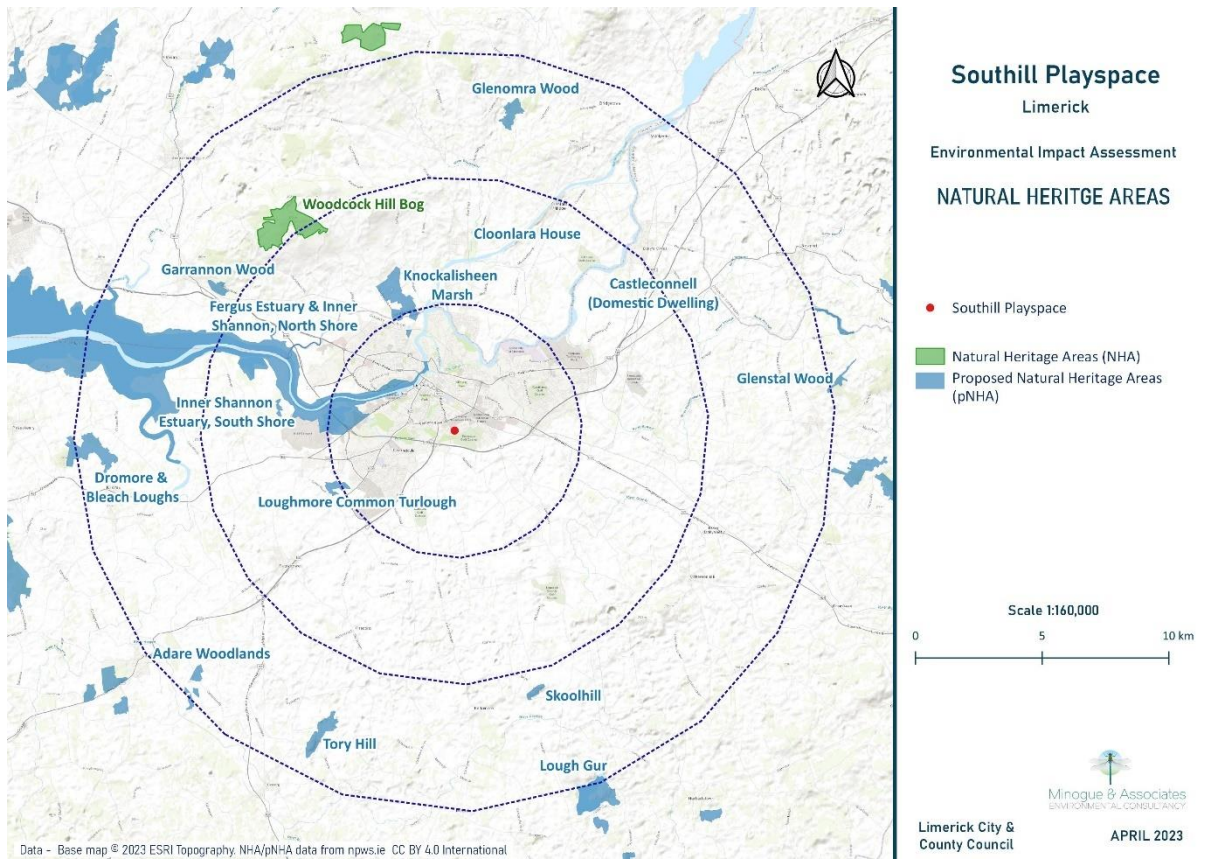


FIGURE 2-3 SURFACE WATER QUALITY

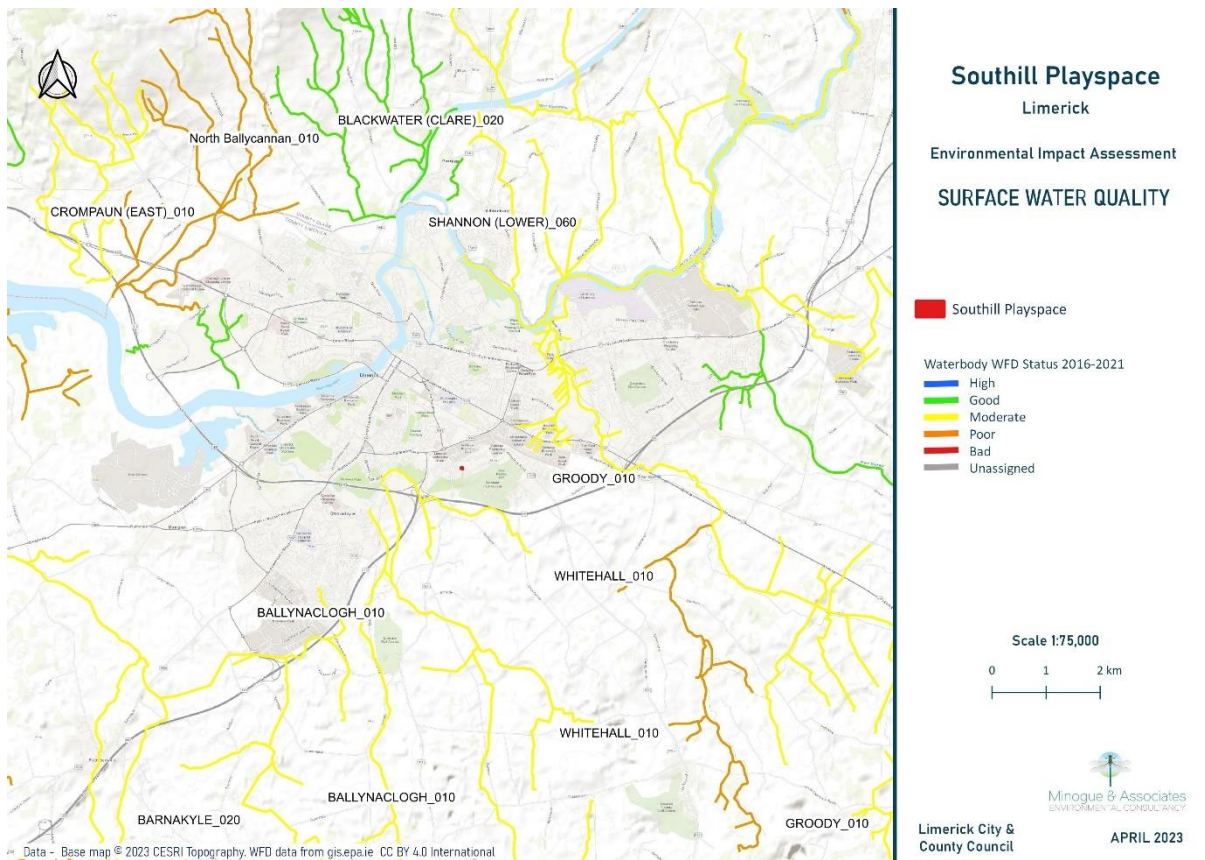


FIGURE 2-4 HYDROLOGY AND PROJECT AREA

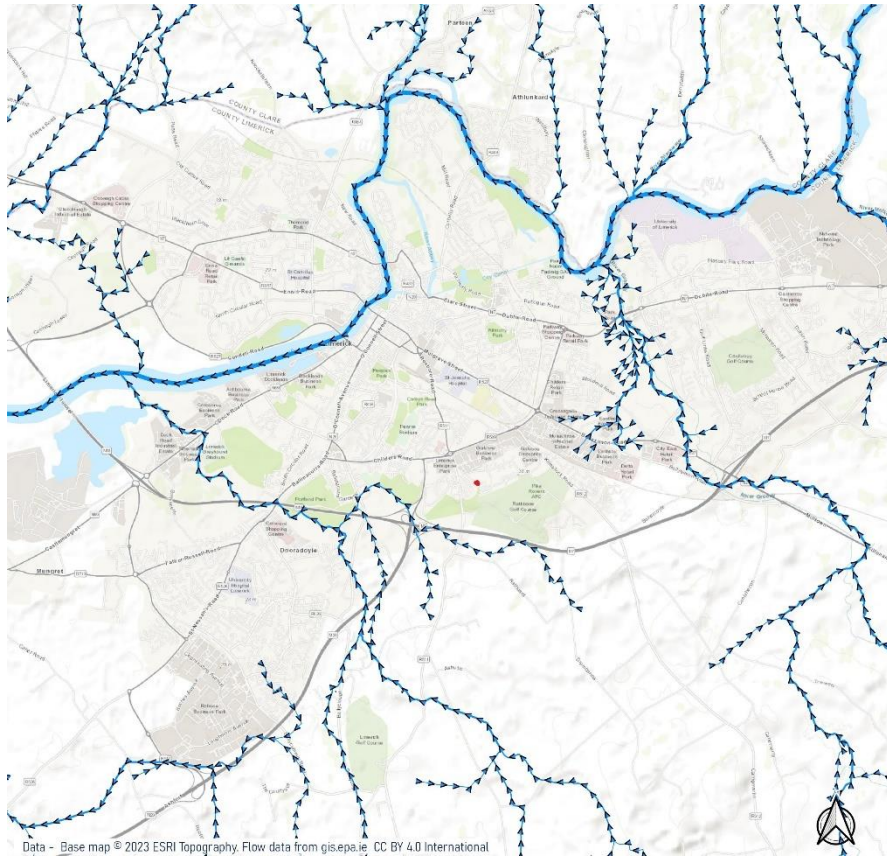


FIGURE 2-5 SOIL

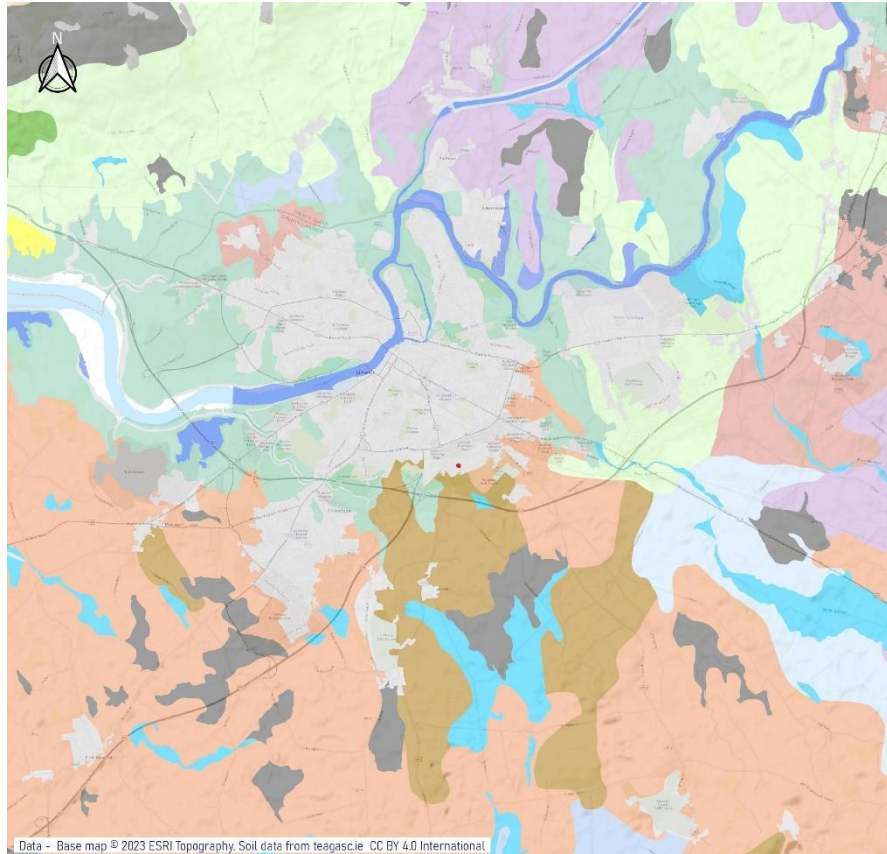
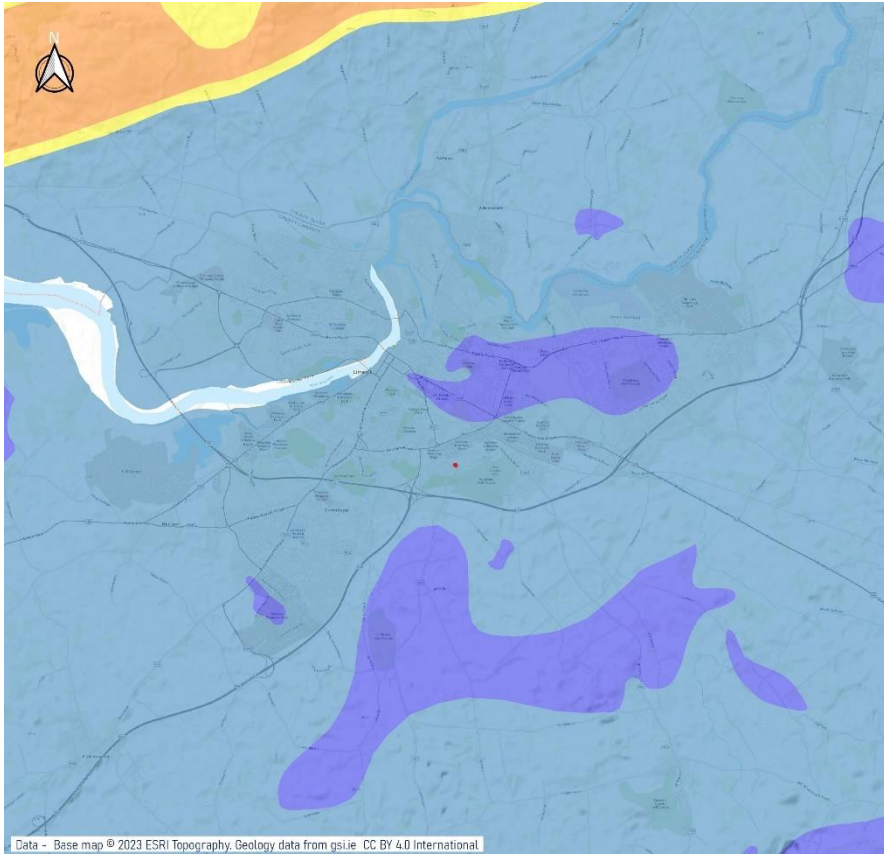


FIGURE 2-6 GEOLOGY



Southhill Playspace
Limerick

Environmental Impact Assessment

GEOLOGY

- Southhill Playspace

Bedrock Geology

- Shale
- Limestone
- Sandstone
- Fine Grained Igneous Rock

Scale 1:75,000

0 1 2 km

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FIGURE 2-7 BUILT HERITAGE



Southhill Playspace
Limerick

Environmental Impact Assessment

BUILT HERITAGE & ARCHAEOLOGY

- Southhill Playspace

- Sites & Monuments Record
- National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH)

Scale 1:6,000

0 100 200 m

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2.5 Standard construction practices

2.5.1 Management of Surface Water

The construction management of the site will take account of the recommendations of the CIRIA guides

Control of Water Pollution from Construction Sites (2001) and Control of Water Pollution from Linear Construction Projects (2006) and

Inland Fisheries Ireland's (IFI's) Requirements for the Protection of Fisheries Habitat during Construction and Development Works.

The provision of these design features will ensure that surface water emitted from the project site during the operation phase is adequately treated and will eliminate any risk of polluted surface water being discharged from the project site during operation.

2.5.2 Measures to reduce the spread of invasive species

It is confirmed that no non-native invasive species listed on the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 were recorded within the proposed development site. Mitigation measures to confirm continued absence of invasive species in light of the ongoing construction activity in and around the development site are outlined below:

- In the event that additional topsoil and quarried stone is required on the site, it 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.
- All machinery will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected prior to arrival and departure from the site (through pre-agreed Biosecurity Protocols) to prevent the spread of invasive species. This process will be detailed in the contractor's method statement.

These will be developed in line with

- TII: The Management of Invasive Alien Plant Species on National Roads – Standard (2020)
- NRA (2008). Guidelines for the Management of Waste from National Road Construction Project.
- Biosecurity protocols available for aquatic and riparian species available on the Control of Aquatic Invasive Species and Restoration of Natural Communities in Ireland (CAISIE) www.caisie.ie.

2.5.3 Mitigation Measures for Breeding Birds during Construction

Removal of vegetation (e.g. scrub and grassland) should be avoided, between the 1st of March and the 31st of August, to avoid direct impacts on nesting birds. Where the construction programme does not allow this seasonal restriction to be observed, then these areas will be inspected by a suitably qualified ecologist for the presence of breeding birds prior to clearance. Areas found not to contain nests will be cleared within three days of the nest survey. Where the vegetation is not cleared within three days of checks, a repeat check will be required. Should nesting birds be encountered during surveys, the removal of vegetation will be required to be delayed until after the nesting has finished.

2.5.4 Enhancement measures

At detailed design stage, planting schemes should align with the All Ireland Pollinator plan. The provision of additional trees of native provenance and planting schemes in line with the All Ireland Pollinator plan should provide compensatory foraging habitat for wildlife and over time, the establishment of trees should provide additional nesting and roosting habitats for wildlife.

3 EIA Screening

3.1 Environmental Factors to be considered in the EIA Screening

This Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report assesses whether this proposed development requires “full” Environmental Impact Assessment. The legislation requires screening to be undertaken to determine whether 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. As described in Section 1.2.1 this project does not meet the criteria or categories for mandatory EIA nor correspond to development of over 2 hectares in a business district for urban development, nor corresponds to Roads Development under the Roads Act 1993, as amended.

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.

3.2 Impact 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 7a and are grouped under the following headings.

1. Planning Applications within the past five years – Table 3.1

2. Characteristics of the Proposed Development - Table 3.2

3. Location of the Proposed Development - Table 3.3 and

4. Characteristics of Potential Impact Tables 3.4 and 3.5

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

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.

3.3 Projects for the Cumulative Assessment

The proposed development was considered in combination with other projects in the area that could result in cumulative effects on the environment.

The online planning system of Limerick City and County Council was consulted on the 15th May 2022 for the subject lands and immediate surrounds. No planning applications were lodged within the immediate project area in the last three years from 2018-2023.

In light of the above, the project however will not have the potential to combine with other land use activities to result in likely significant effects to qualifying habitats or species of the European sites or other environmental parameters. This is due to the absence of recent planning applications over the past three years that could give rise to cumulative impacts on arising from landuse activities.

3.3.1 Assessment of effects

The aim of the next section is to address likely impacts on the environment by the implementation of the proposed development. A brief overview of the sensitivities and impacts will be highlighted.

Whether an EIA would be deemed relevant to the scale of the project and the environment will then be determined. The following sections present the EIA Screening based on the criteria contained in Schedule 7a and are grouped under the following headings:

1. Characteristics of the Proposed Development - Table 3.2
2. Location of the Proposed Development - Table 3.3 and
3. Characteristics of Potential Impact - Tables 3.2 and 3.3

TABLE 3.2. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Screening Question	Response
1. Characteristics of projects	

Screening Question	Response
The characteristics of projects must be considered, with particular regard to:	
(a) the size and design of the whole project	<p>The project relates to the provision of a play area, designed in collaboration with the local community and is within a well established urban environment with existing levels of human presence and associated noise and traffic.</p> <p>Of itself the project is not identified as giving rise to significant negative environmental effects due to scale, nature and size of the proposed development. The proposals in and of themselves are consistent with the objectives of the Limerick City and County Development Plan 2022 to 2028 and seek to enhance and improve the urban environment.</p>
(b) cumulation with other existing and/or approved projects;	<p>The proposed development was considered in combination with other projects in the area that could result in cumulative effects on the environment. No significant environmental effects are identified from interaction or in combination with other existing or approved projects.</p>
(c) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;	<p>Due to the scale and nature of the project, small volumes of natural resources will be used during the construction process. Natural resources will not be used from the surrounding 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;	<p>Yes, but not significant. Ancillary wastes will be managed to be separated to appropriate waste streams for local reuse or for disposal during to suitably licensed facilities in the region.</p> <p>Likely significant effects on the environment are not identified.</p>
(e) pollution and nuisances;	<p>The construction phase is minor in scale and approach. The project is not expected to result in any likely significant adverse effects on the environment and are identified as contributing positively to a number of factors in particular human beings, and material assets.</p>
(f) the risk of major accidents and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those	<p>The risks of major accidents are not considered to be significant subject to standard construction practices being followed through the construction phases. The project will include proper site management, maintenance and operation of all machinery and works</p>

Screening Question	Response
caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge;	<p>associated with the construction phase, on site safety and training.</p> <p>Given the above approaches, the project does not pose significant risk of major accidents and/or disaster.</p>
(g) the risks to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution).	<p>As above, significant risks to human health are not identified for this proposal. Positive effects are identified in relation to Population and Human Health and Material Assets due to the augmentation the existing area to provide a safe playing space for young people and children in the area. Given the above approaches the project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment</p>
Will the proposed development create a significant amount of nuisance during its construction or operation?	<p>It is not anticipated that significant noise levels will arise during construction (they will be temporary and restricted to machinery) and operational noise is not identified as being significant.</p> <p>Given the above approaches the project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment</p>

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

Rationale: The works associated with the project site are minor in scale and nature, construction activities are localised and minor; with the application of standard construction practice guidance no significant adverse effects are identified.

TABLE 3.3 . 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 project as summarised in Section 2.2 relates to provision of safe playing space in the Southill area..</p> <p>Given the overall approach and measures as presented in Section 2 of this report, the project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment. The existing landuse is urban and the proposed development enhances rather than detracts from the urban landuse and public realm.</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>The works will not impact the natural resources in the area . The works do not result in likely significant effects on the environment.</p>

Screening Question	Response
<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 identified as giving rise to significant effects given its scale and approach to works.</p> <p>A screening statement for Appropriate Assessment has been prepared by MEC and it was found that no likely significant effects on the conservation management objectives of European Sites.</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>There are no direct or indirect effects identified for the project and potential risks to these surface waters of the Ballynaclough or Groody Rivers. There are no potential impacts identified for water quality or alterations to hydrological streams. The project does not result in likely significant effects on water resources in the environment.</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. Given the above approaches the project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment.</p>
<p>(vii) densely populated areas;</p>	<p>The project site is adjacent to an established urban area and given its size, type and scale, no negative effects are identified in relation to this criterion with positive effects identified for a number of EIA topics in line with enhancing and improving the public realm.</p>
<p>(viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance</p>	<p>Given the above approaches the project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment, no such effects are identified.</p>

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

Rationale: The project in and of itself is designed to contribute to safe recreation and play space for residents of Southill.. The works as proposed in this development are considered to result in negligible

environmental effects given the above approach the potential construction related effects is reduced to minimal effects.

The screening process assesses the most significant potential impacts in relation to the themes outlined below in Table 3.4 below. These are considered as follows:

3.3.2 Type and Characteristics of the Potential Impacts

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 3-4. LOCATION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Environmental Topic	Potential Impact
Human Beings	The project does not result in likely significant negative effects on the environment in relation to Human beings due to the scale, location, type of project and approach to construction. Post construction positive effects are identified for number of topics including human beings, air quality, landscape and material assets.
Flora and Fauna	The project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment in relation to Flora and Fauna. No instream works are proposed and the project in and of itself is not identified as giving rise to effects on flora and fauna.
Soil and Geology	The project does not result in likely significant effects on soil and geology due to the scale, size, type and location of the project and the approach to construction.
Water	No instream works proposed . The construction approach will reduce the risk of any construction related activities on the water resources. The project does not result in likely significant effects on water resources in the environment.
Air Quality and climate	Emissions during works phase will be minimized through best practice and will be temporary in duration and nature. The project does not result in likely significant negative effects on the air quality and climate

Environmental Topic	Potential Impact
	and through enhanced measures for pedestrians and cyclists is positive in relation to this topic. .
Noise and Vibration	Noise during the construction phase may result in temporary and relate only to the construction elements of the works. The project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment.
Cultural Heritage	Given the scale, type and duration of the project no significant negative effects on this parameter are identified. Positive effects are identified.
Landscape	No significant negative effects identified. The design of the play space will contribute to the public realm.
Interrelationship between above parameters	The key interrelationship arises between human beings, material assets. Given the approach outlined in Section 2, the project does not result in significant negative effects on the environment and is expected to enhance the wellbeing of the community in the longer-term and enhance these topics.

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

Rationale: Localised and temporary negligible impacts are identified associated with construction. The nature of the receiving environment and the proposed development, together with the effective implementation of the standard construction and installation measures means that there is no real likelihood of significant negative effects on the environment. The public realm measures will contribute positively to the urban character of the project area and provide positive impacts on population and human health associated with the provision of an attractive well designed play area.

TABLE 3.5. LOCATION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Characteristics of potential impacts	
The potential significant effects of proposed development in relation to criteria set out under Tables 3.3. and 3.2 above, and having regard in particular to:	
(a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	Minor to negligible temporary impacts are identified primarily at construction stage The geographic area of the proposed works are confined to the immediate project site, 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;	There are no transboundary impacts identified for the proposed project.

Characteristics of potential impacts

The potential significant effects of proposed development in relation to criteria set out under Tables 3.3. and 3.2 above, and having regard in particular to:

(d) the intensity and complexity of the impact;	Given the scale, size and nature of the project no significant effects are identified.
(e) the probability of the impact;	There is low probability of impacts given the approach to construction, the location, scale and type of development proposals. .
(f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact;	Impacts identified for topics are not significant and will be temporary in nature, as they relate to construction phase. The operational impacts are positive across a number of topics as they seek to enhance and support the public realm of the area.
(g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of 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.. No significant environmental effects are identified from interaction or in combination with other existing or approved projects. The proposed works have been assessed cumulatively within this Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report and concludes that potential cumulative effects are not identified.

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 the construction phase of this project. Positive, long term impacts are identified relating to human beings, air quality/climatic factors, cultural heritage and landscape in particular. The scale, nature, design and location of the project is not identified as giving rise to significant negative effects across the EIA topics.

3.3.3 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 City and County Development Plan 2022-2028

(ii) Natura Impact Report for the Limerick City and County Development Plan 2022-2028 and Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Limerick City and County Development Plan 2022-2028

3.3.4 Results of Relevant Available Assessments

3.3.4.1 Limerick City and County Development Plan 2022-2028, SEA ER and NIR

The project is consistent with the following objectives for physical regeneration of Southill in the Limerick City and County Development Plan 2022-2028:

Chapter three: Spatial Strategy: UCA 02: Surround Suburban Area

This area covers the suburbs immediately adjoining the Inner-City Area to the north, south and east. It encompasses the neighbourhoods of Ballysimon, Garryowen, Singland, Rhebogue, Corbally, King's Island, Janesboro, South Circular Road/ Ballinacurra and Southill. This area is substantially residential in character with a range of services

Objective RA O1 Regeneration Opportunity Areas It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Support the social, economic and physical regeneration of Moyross, St. Mary's Park/King's Island, Ballinacurra Weston and Southill.

b) Support and facilitate the physical, economic and social framework strategies for the Regeneration Areas in accordance with the Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan. All developments in the Regeneration Areas will be assessed in accordance with the principles and objectives for each area, as set out in this section. All proposed developments within these areas will be assessed in the context of the impact on the local area and on the City as a whole.

c) Integrate Regeneration Areas and communities into the mainstream social, economic and community life of the City through a long-term commitment to support social, economic and physical regeneration of the most deprived areas.

d) Improve the tenure diversity within the Regeneration Areas.

e) Deliver the Social, Physical and Economic Framework Strategies of the adopted Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan.

f) Undertake an annual Monitoring Report of the adopted Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan to establish key trends emerging and measure progress.

g) Actively support the implementation of the Key Local Objectives set out in the Physical Framework Strategy for each of the Regeneration Areas.

Objective: To support the social, economic and physical regeneration of Moyross, St. Mary's Park/ King's Island, Ballinacurra Weston and Southill. Purpose: To support and facilitate the physical, economic and social framework strategies for the Regeneration Areas in accordance with the Limerick

Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan. All developments in the Regeneration Areas will be assessed in accordance with the principles and objectives for each area as set out under the Compact Growth and Revitalisation Chapter of this Development Plan. All proposed developments within these areas will be assessed in the context of the impact on the local area and on the City as a whole.

SEA Comment: Consistent with the aims of both the Regeneration Plan and the RSES which acknowledges the needs of regeneration areas in Limerick.

The Natura Impact Report recommends amendments to ensure wastewater capacity is addressed as follows:

In accordance with objective WM 11-1 (g) of the Draft Plan, development can only proceed where appropriate wastewater treatment is available which meets the requirements of environmental legislation, the Water Framework Directive and the requirements of the Habitats Directive.

3.3.4.2 Water Framework Directive

The Gradogue River lies within the Blackwater (Munster) Catchment (18) and the Funshion sub-catchment (10). The Blackwater also forms part of the Margaritifera SAC Catchment. Catchments of SAC populations listed in S.I. 296 of 2009.

Water quality within the area is variable; whilst groundwater is identified as being of poor status; surface water is variable; two monitoring stations are present close to the plan areas; the monitor at the Bridge at Aldi classifies water quality as 'good' whilst the monitor further west, downstream classifies the water quality as 'poor'. The Funshion River is classified as 'moderate'.

(www.catchments.ie). The catchment is at risk of not meeting the requirements of the Water Framework Directive for surface and groundwater.

4 Conclusion

4.1 Screening Determination

Article 4(5) of the EIA Directive states:

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.

As established in the preceding Section 1.2.1 of this report (EIA Project Type and Thresholds), given the nature and scale of the proposed project, the proposals do not correspond to any project type, nor do they meet the thresholds and criteria for the most appropriate potential project type of 'urban development' as set out in the EIA Directive and Schedule 5 of the 2011 Regulations.

The EIA Screening Report has provided an overview assessment of the Proposed Development against the Schedule 7 criteria of 2011 Regulations for the avoidance of doubt.

Section 3 examined the nature of the development including the size and location of the development, and the types and characteristics of likely potential effects. Construction works are anticipated to result in temporary negative effects on certain parameters, whilst the operation phase will result in long term positive effects via improvement of permeability and public realm. The approach to construction will include best practice standard construction measures. The public realm measures will provide for improved permeability, safer spaces for walkers and cyclists and enhanced public realm overall. Integration of SUDs and planting regime will contribute to improved surface water run off and local wildlife features.

Given the scale and nature of the project and taking account of all available information, the overall probability of impacts on the receiving environment arising from the proposed development is considered to be negligible with positive effects identified for a number of EIA topics primarily human beings, cultural heritage, water, landscape, material assets, air/climatic factors.

The information provided in this EIA Screening Report can be used by the competent authority Cork County Council to conclude and determine that an EIA is not required for the proposed project as there will be no significant negative effects.

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

References

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

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

OPR Practice Note PN02 Environmental Impact Assessment Screening (2021)

Limerick City and County Development Plan 2022 2028

Natura Impact Report for the Limerick City and County Development Plan 2022-2028

Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Limerick City and County Development Plan 2022-2028

Interpretation of definitions of project categories of annex I and II of the EIA Directive, 2015.

EU and Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects - Guidance on Screening, 2017.

Government of Ireland EIA Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding sub-threshold development, 2003.

Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment, 2018.

Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports, EPA 2022