



# EIA SCREENING REPORT

Saint Pauls to Ballykeeffe Roundabout  
Active Travel Scheme Limerick

MEC Ltd

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This report has been prepared by Minogue Environmental Consulting Ltd 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.

This report is prepared for Limerick City and County Council and we accept no responsibility to third parties to whom this report, or any part thereof, is made known. Any such party relies on the report at their own risk.



Minogue & Associates  
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANCY


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# 1 INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

Minogue Environmental Consulting Ltd. have been commissioned by the Limerick City and County Council (LCCC) to undertake a Screening Report for Environmental Impact Assessment for proposed cycling facilities on the R526, Limerick City. The route is part of strategic urban and transport planning for Limerick and has been identified as a viable option for encouraging sustainable transport options. The Project title is the Saint Pauls to Ballykeeffe Roundabout Active Travel Scheme.

## 1.2 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)<sup>1</sup> 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 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. Article 103(2) sites comprise the following:

- a) A European Site;
- b) An area the subject of a notice under section 16(2) (b) of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000;
- c) An area designated as a Natural Heritage Area under section 18 of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000;

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2018/si/296/made/en/pdf>

- d) Land established or recognised as a nature reserve within the meaning of section 15 or 16 of the Wildlife Act, 1976, as amended by sections 26 and 27 of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000; or
- e) Land designated as a refuge for flora or as a refuge for fauna under section 17 of the Wildlife Act, 1976, as amended by section 28 of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000.

### 1.3 SCREENING

According to European Commission Guidance (2017<sup>2</sup>)

*“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.”*

#### 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):

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<sup>2</sup> Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects Guidance on Screening (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU). European Commission 2017. Page 23.

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 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.**)

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:

- Practice Note on Environmental Impact Assessment, Office of the Planning Regulator (CHECK full title and reference, date is 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.

## **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 preparation of Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment. Additional inputs were provided by Eilis Vaughan, who provided the Geographical Information Systems analysis and mapping outputs.

## 2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

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### 2.1 SITE DESCRIPTION

The proposed scheme is located on the greater Raheen/Dooradoyle area (See Figure 2.1), which is a large residential area in the southwest of Limerick City, with a number of schools and employers in the location. The Crescent Shopping Centre is located off the R926 adjacent to the Ballykeeffe Roundabout and is adjacent to the Limerick City and County Council's County Hall building and library.

### 2.2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed scheme will provide high-quality cycling facilities on a section of the R526 St Nessans Road in the south Limerick environs. This area is c.600m in length, beginning at the southern end of Nessan Road - Father Russell Road roundabout, and commencing at the northern end next to Crescent Shopping Centre.

The provision of the cycling facilities will involve an upgrade of the current road corridor to better accommodate pedestrian, cycling and vehicular provisions. This will be achieved by re-construction of the existing footpaths, construction of cycle tracks and narrowing of the existing road carriageway between the Saint Pauls and Ballykeeffe Roundabouts. The segregated cycle facilities on both sides of the road will be separated from the road carriageway by a c.250mm wide upstand kerb.

The proposed scheme also includes for upgrade works to the Saint Pauls and Ballykeeffe Roundabouts. At Saint Pauls Roundabout it is proposed to provide a grass verge to the segregated cycle tracks on three quadrants of the roundabout with the cycle tracks separate to the footpaths. The outside diameter kerbing to the roundabout would be tightened to provide a buffer to cyclists and to act as a deterrent to high vehicular speeds. Two-way cycle tracks are proposed on two quadrants of the roundabout to link cyclists to/from Father Russell Road to the R526. The zebra crossings on the R526 would be replaced with toucan crossings which would include for bus detection and bus priority on the approach to the roundabout. The existing zebra crossing on Fr Russell Road would be re-constructed as a toucan crossing with improvements to the crossing on the Scoil Phoil Naofa arm of the roundabout.

Land acquisition is required at Sain Pauls Nursing Home to accommodate the proposed upgrade works at Saint Pauls Roundabout.

Similar upgrade works are proposed to Ballykeeffe Roundabout with a grass verge to be provided to the segregated cycle tracks. The outside diameter kerbing to the roundabout would be tightened to provide a buffer to cyclists and to act as a deterrent to high vehicular speeds. Two-way cycle tracks are proposed north of the roundabout on the R526 to link cyclists from the proposed South Circular Road two-way cycle track to a shared road in Ballykeeffe Estate and to the R926 and also to the Crescent Shopping Complex. The existing zebra crossing on the R526 would be replaced with a toucan crossing which would include for bus detection and bus priority on the outbound approach to the roundabout. Island bus stop arrangements would be constructed on the 607781 inbound stop and the 607501 outbound stop. A bus slip lane would be provided along the front of the inbound bus stop which would run to the controlled crossing. The inbound bus lane would be reinstated after the controlled crossing. West of the roundabout on the R526 it is proposed to add a new pedestrian



crossing. The existing zebra crossings on the R926 Dooradoyle Road would be widened to provide for toucan crossings with new segregated cycle tracks on the east and west side of Dooradoyle Road.

### **2.2.1 Duration of works**

Works to the R526 and associated junctions at the Saint Pauls and Ballykeeffe Roundabouts will include for the construction of the segregated cycle facilities on both sides of the road separated from the road carriageway by a c.250mm wide upstand kerb. The scheme will also include modifications to the existing road and footpaths. Other elements to be delivered in conjunction with the above include junction improvements as required, works to bus lanes/stops, signals, pedestrian facilities with associated modification to drainage, line markings and signage etc. The works are to be carried out over a c.600m length of the existing roadway. It is estimated that the works will take up to 9 months to complete.

### **2.2.2 Approach to works.**

It is likely that the works would be completed in phases to allow for access to existing properties and side roads and also to facilitate pedestrian access. The phasing would include for the completion of the footpath re-construction / cycle track construction on one side of the road and repairs to surfacing over half the roadway along with services works to allow for a lane reduction with two-way traffic maintained. Following the completion of one side of the road, works will be carried out on the opposite side to include footpath re-construction / cycle track construction repairs to surfacing along with services works on the remaining half of the road.

### **2.2.3 Plant & construction materials and personnel required**

- 20 tonne excavator
- rubber tyred excavators, 6 tonne JCB
- tonne mini diggers
- 30 tonne dump truck
- 6 tonne dumpers
- 7.5 tonne multi-purpose truck
- 20 tonne and 30 tonne delivery trucks
- teleporter
- site vehicles
- compactor plates
- 6 tonne vibrating rollers
- paving machines
- bitumen boiler
- oil tanker/sprayer
- road planning machine
- road saws
- air compressors
- jack hammers
- traffic management signage, cones and barriers
- herras fencing
- road sweeper

The materials required for the works will be typical civil engineering road construction materials consisting of cement, gravels, aggregates, capping stone, block pavements, precast concrete kerbs, in-situ concrete kerbs and footpaths, precast concrete manholes, covers, plastic ducting, galvanised/cast iron chamber covers, powder coated street lighting columns and traffic signal poles, LED lighting and traffic signals, galvanised steel signage poles, metal traffic signs etc.

The site personnel would be approximately 20-30 persons.

The Contract Documents will include for the following standard construction guidance and guidelines.

#### **2.2.4 Mitigation Measures**

The Contractor shall 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).

A biodiversity plan has been prepared and is provided under separate cover.

Figure 2-1. Site Location

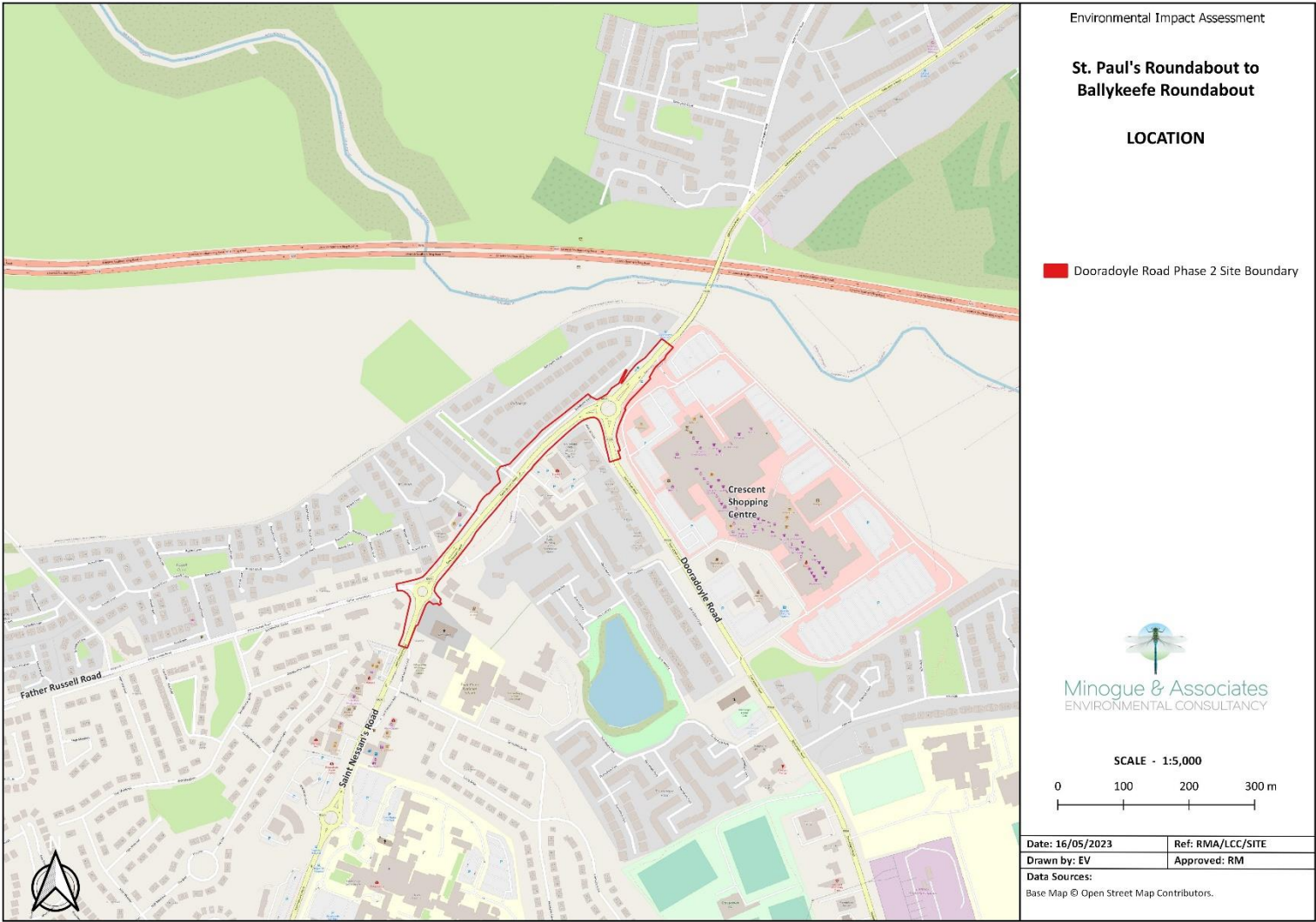




Figure 2-2 Site Location over aerial imagery



## 3 RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT

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### 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 3.1** presents the baseline information pertaining to the project site. Figures 3.1 to 3.10 present environmental information relevant to each topic.

Table 3.1 Baseline Information for the Project Site

Parameter	Sub-parameter	Information
Human Beings	Population	<p>The proposed cycleway is located on St Nessans, approximately 4km away from Limerick City Centre . The townlands are situated within the Electoral District of Ballycummin, with a total population of 18,388 (2016 Census).</p> <p>The Scheme is located in the greater Raheen / Dooradoyle area which is a large residential area in the Southwest of Limerick City with a number of local schools and employers in the area. University Hospital Limerick is located on the R526 and accessed via Ballykeeffe Roundabout at the north of the Scheme. The Crescent Shopping Centre is situated off the R926 adjacent to Ballykeeffe Roundabout and comprises the largest concentration of retail floor space outside of the city centre and is adjacent to Limerick City &amp; County Council’s County Hall building and library.</p>
	Human Health and Noise	<p>Limerick’s total population does not exceed the 100,000-resident threshold to be included under Strategic Noise Maps or Noise Action Plans. Therefore, only noise from major roads is considered in the Noise Action Plan. The Residential Noise Hotspots identified in the Council’s functional area in the Dooradoyle/Gouldavoher that are relevant for this project are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• R526, Dooradoyle</li> <li>• R510, Bauncloka</li> </ul> <p>These are included in the hotspots that serve many of the vehicular routes in and out of the city. As per the EPA noise mapping tool (Reporting period 2017), the noise levels on R510 can range from Lden values of 55-69db, and Lnight values of 50-64db. The noise levels on R526 can vary between Lden values of 70-74db and Lnight 60-64db.</p>
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	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.
	Summary of Habitats present	The habitats present on the immediate site are reflective of the urban landuse and are classified as Built Land and Artificial Surface (BL3), with a narrow strip of amenity grassland and a mix of young and occasional semi-mature tree planting.
	European Sites	Six Natura 2000 sites, comprising five SACs and one SPA occur within the wider area surrounding the project site. All other Natura 2000 sites are located at a remote distance from the project site.
	Protected Species	The protected species recorded from this area are all birds. There are 32 protected bird species recorded in this area over the last ten-year period.

Parameter	Sub-parameter	Information
	Invasive Species	Four invasive species (the Greylag Goose, Butterfly-bush, Zebra Mussel and the American Mink) have been recorded in the biodiversity grid containing the project site.
Geology and Soil	Geology	The published 1:100,000 scale of the Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) map of the area indicates that the proposed route is underlain by undifferentiated limestone of Visean limestone and calcareous shale. The aquifer is designated as <i>Locally Important</i> , with moderate vulnerability.
	Soil	The soils in the project area consists of Luvisols and a mix of Urban Soils. Luvisol comprises the wider area around the proposed development (See Figure 3.2)
Water	Surface Water	The project area lands are situated within the Shannon Estuary South (code: 24) and the sub-catchment of Ballynaclogh (SC010). The Ballinacurra Creek which flows into the River Shannon is the nearest surface water feature and is connected to the River Shannon via approximately 225m from the nearest point of the project site. This stream is classified as <i>Poor</i> status under the Water Framework Directive.
	Groundwater	The project site is situated on the groundwater body Limerick City Southwest (IE_SH_G_141), within the catchments 24 Shannon Estuary South and 25D Lower Shannon. The groundwater feature is considered <i>Good</i> as of 2018 under its Overall Groundwater Status within the Water Framework Directive. Groundwater vulnerability is classified as high and moderate.
	Flooding	The OPW Flood Maps indicate that the project site has no records of past flood events, although there have been two reported fluvial flood events (Dooradoyle Limerick Recurring) and (Dooradoyle-St. Nessans/ Father Russell recurring) .
Air and Climatic Factors		The nearest air quality monitoring is the People’s Park, north east of the site.. Monitoring is carried out using continuous monitors for ozone, oxides of nitrogen and particulates (PM <sub>2.5</sub> and PM <sub>10</sub> ). Air Quality as of 29 <sup>th</sup> May 2023 was good.
		Reduction of transport related emissions is part of the overall project scale by encouraging a modal shift to pedestrian and cycling facilities.
Landscape		The landscape in the project is largely flat and low-lying with an average elevation of 50ft. The CORINE 2018 Landcover system notes that the project site can be classified as <i>Urban and Industrial</i> (See Figure 3.6). The site visit done in February 2021 and February 2022 confirms that the area can be classified as sub-urban, containing a mix of residential and commercial buildings. The existing pedestrian footpaths along which the cycleway is proposed to be built, are paralleled by trees and patches of grass at various points.
Cultural Heritage		The proposed site is not contained within any Architectural Conservation Area for Limerick City. A search on heritagemaps.ie indicated that no protected structures are present along the relevant section of Dooradoyle Road.

Parameter	Sub-parameter	Information
Material Assets		Dooradoyle is the main road relevant to the project area, and contains the Crescent Shopping Centre, Limerick City and County offices and library and a mix of other facilities and housing.
Interrelationships between the above parameters		The primary inter-relationships identified for this project relate to population and human health, material assets, and landscape.



Figure 3-1 Special Areas of Conservation

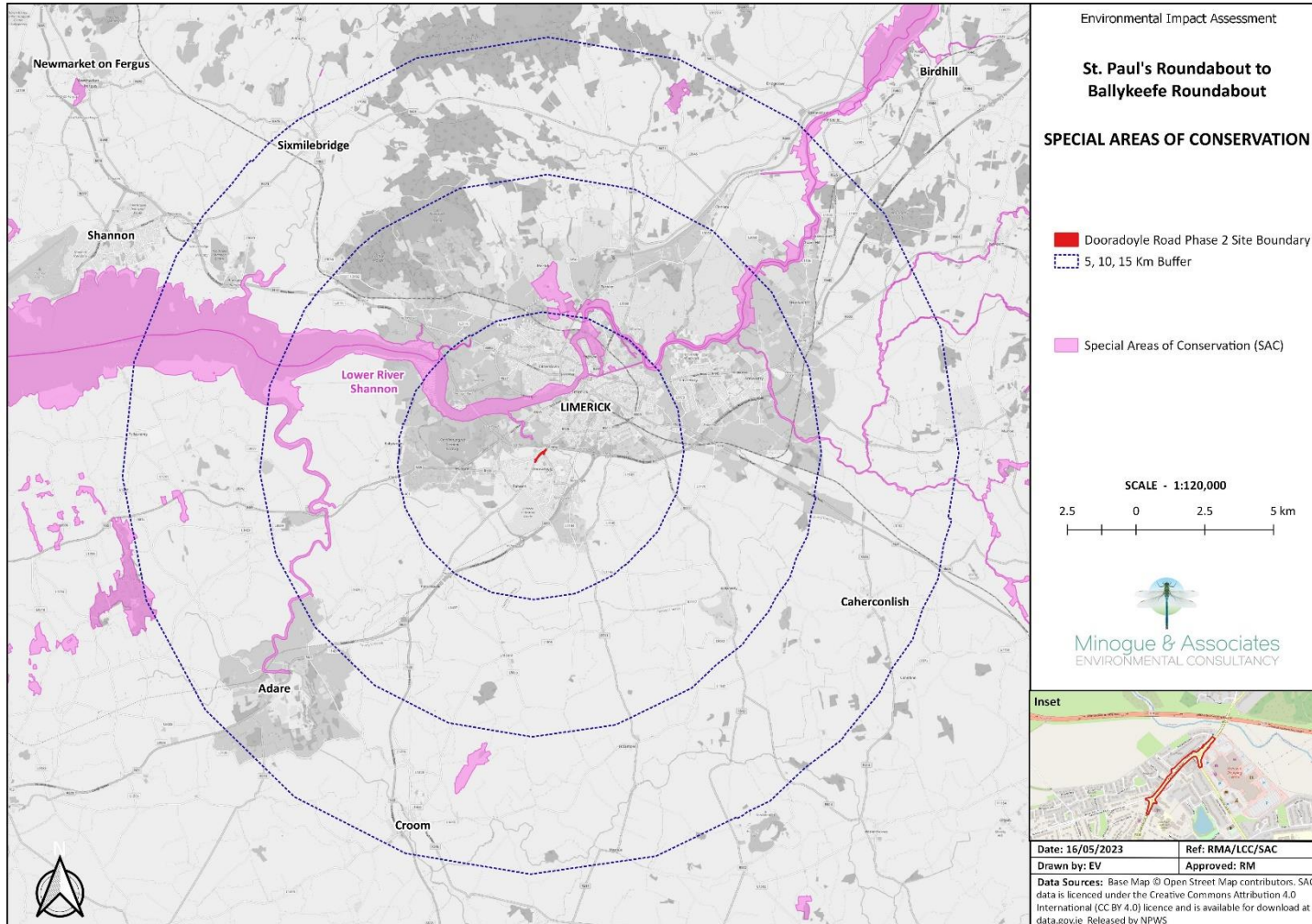


Figure 3-2 Special Protection Areas

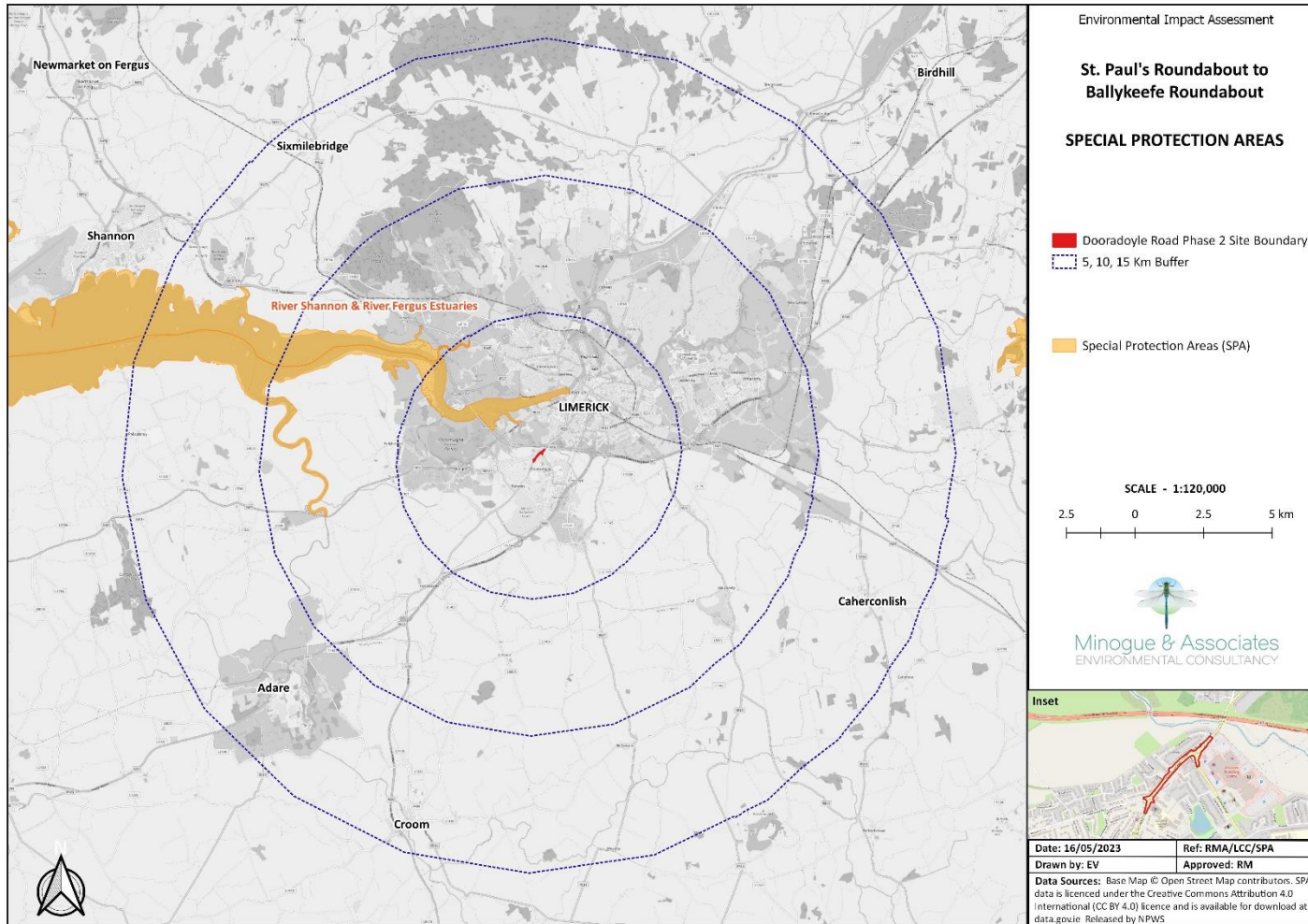


Figure 3-3 Geology Map for project site

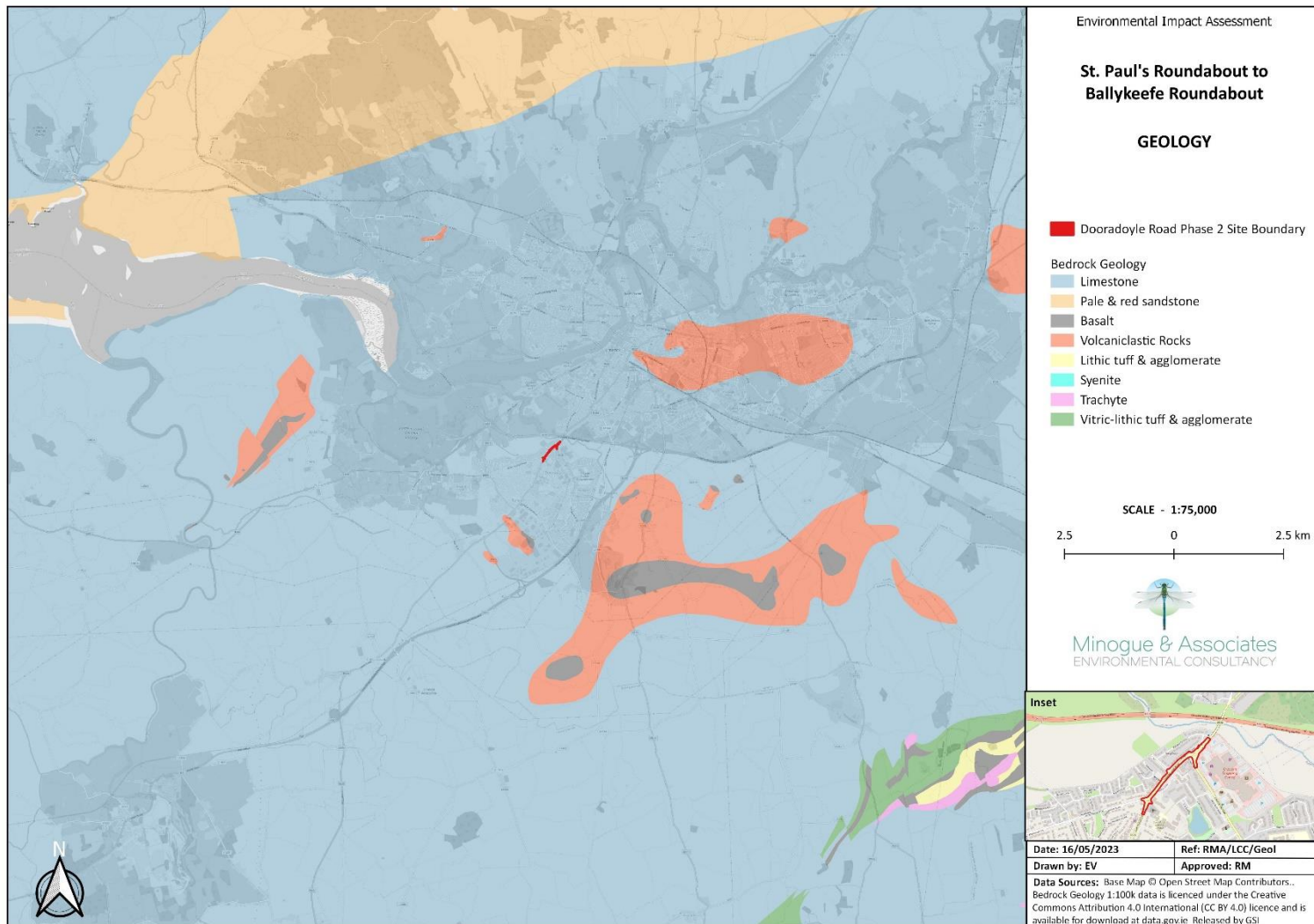




Figure 3-4 Soil Map containing project site

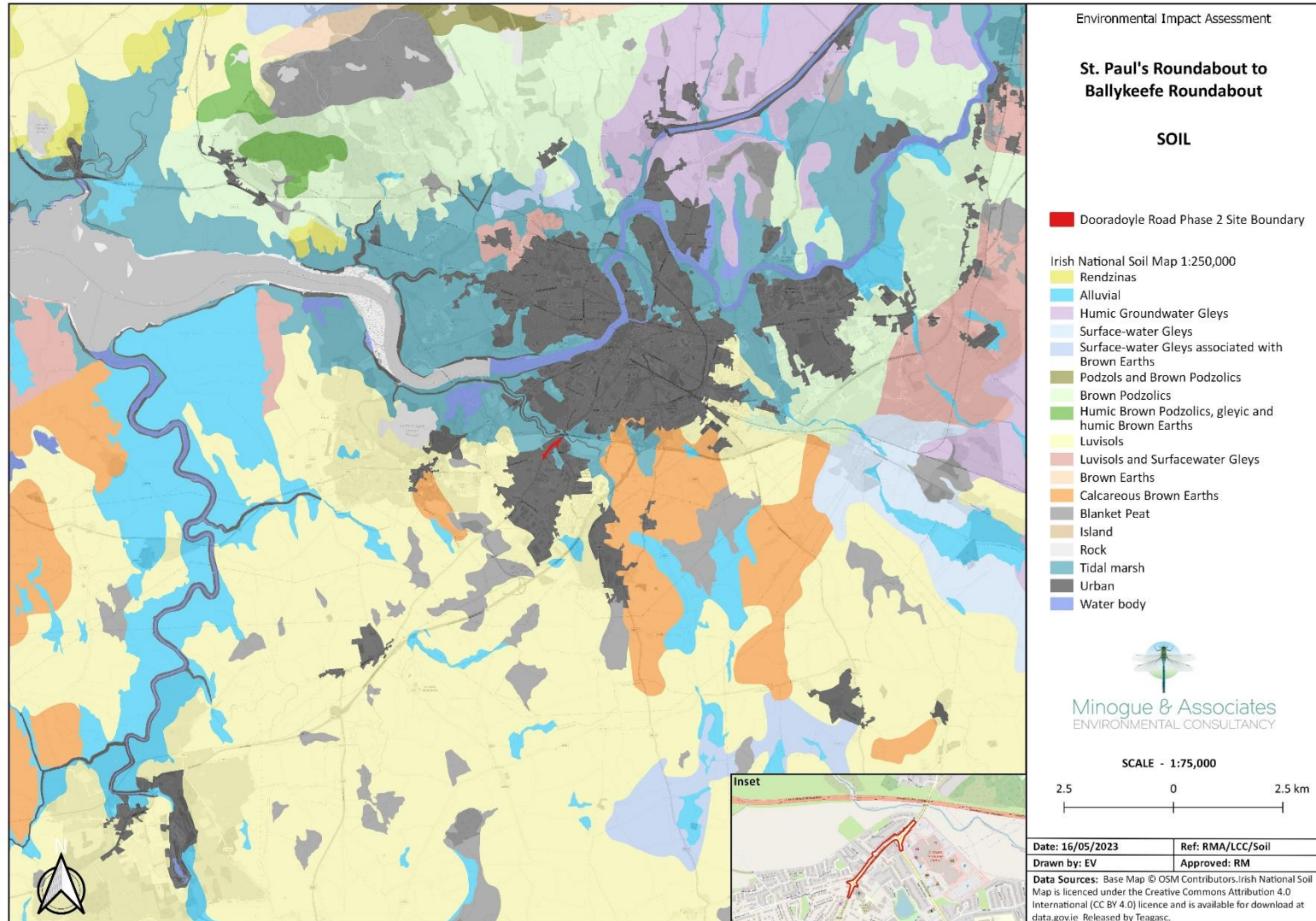




Figure 3-5 WFD Status for Surface Water Features in the project area

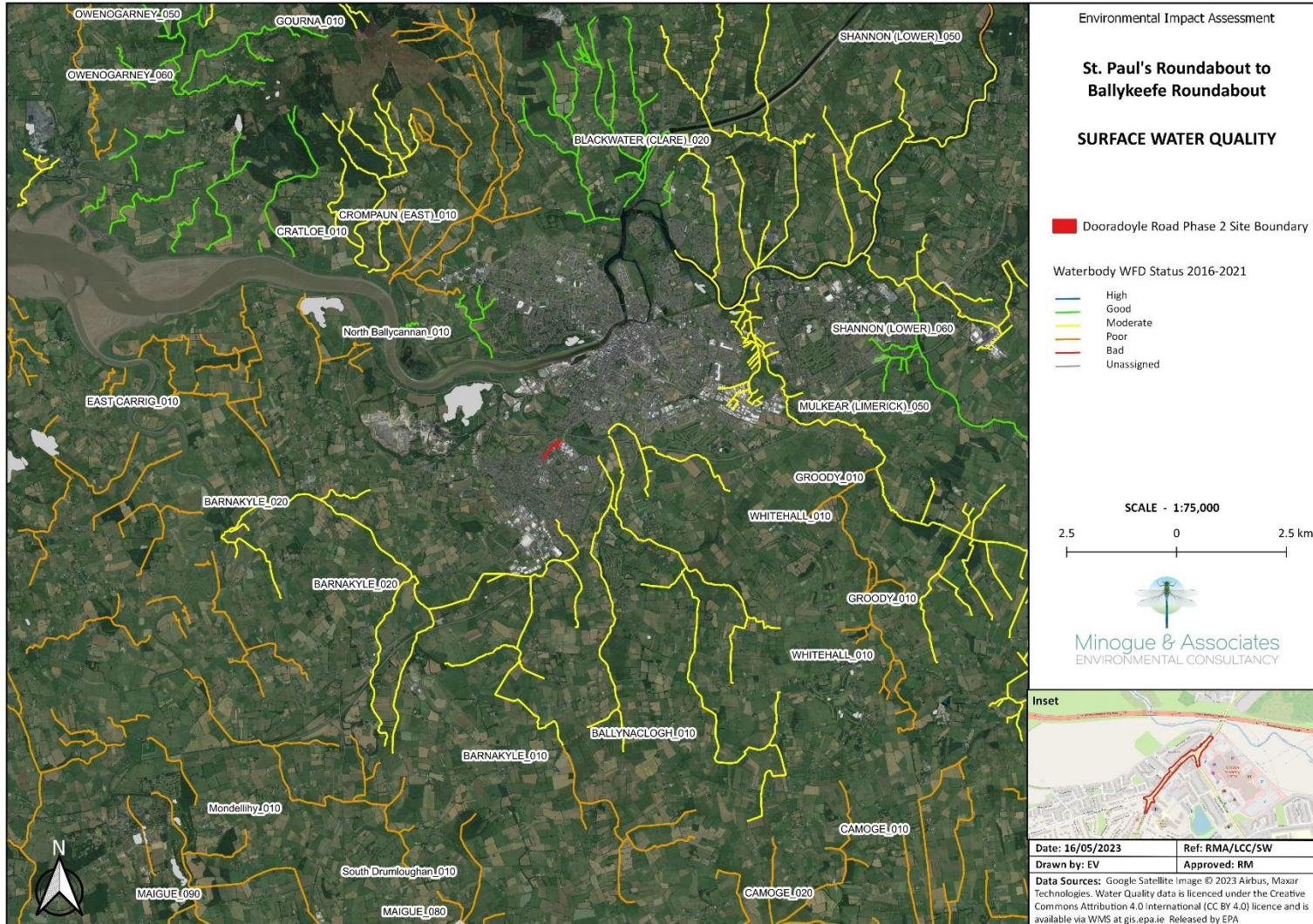




Figure 3-6 Flow direction of surface waters

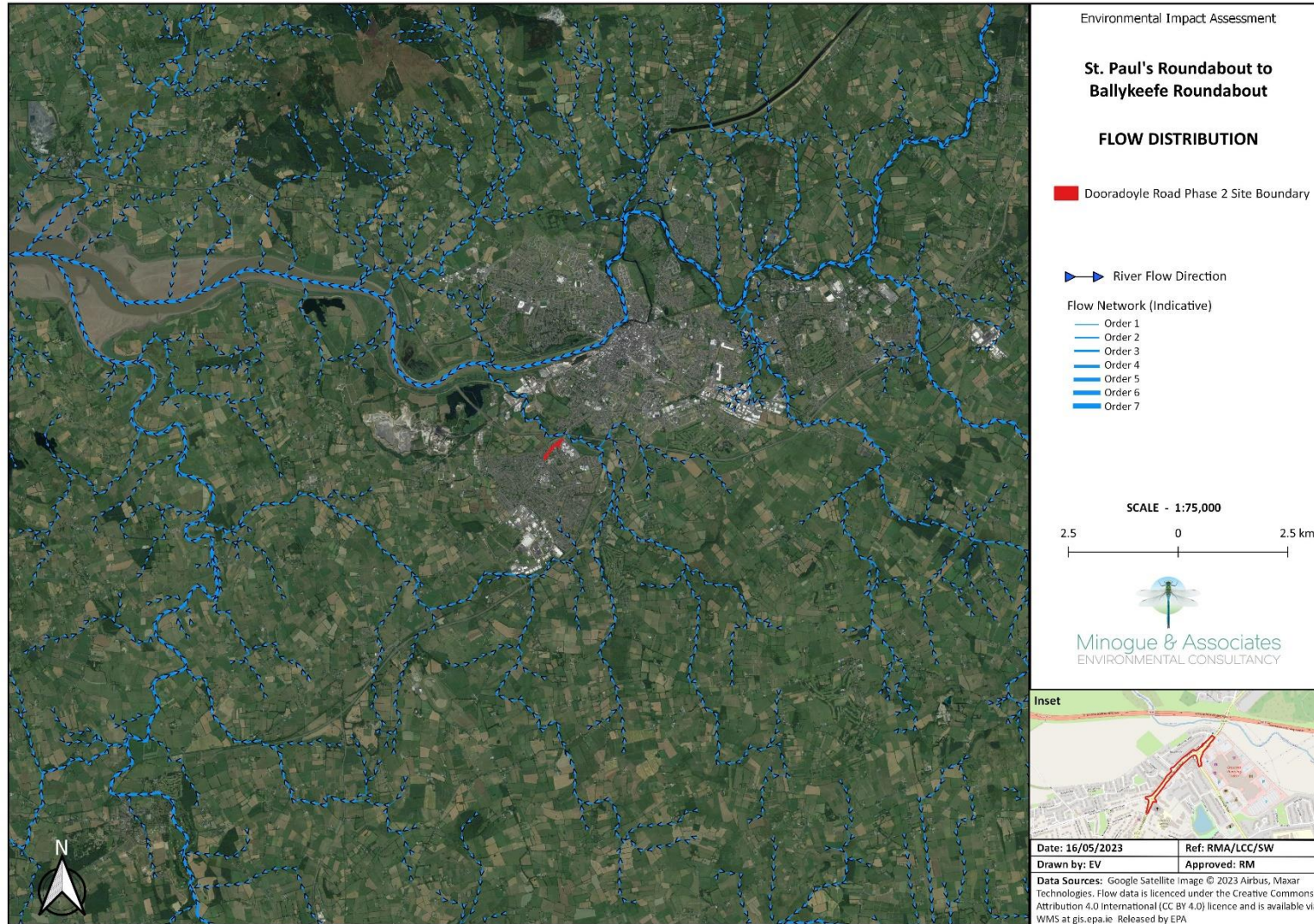




Figure 3-7 Groundwater Vulnerability in the project area

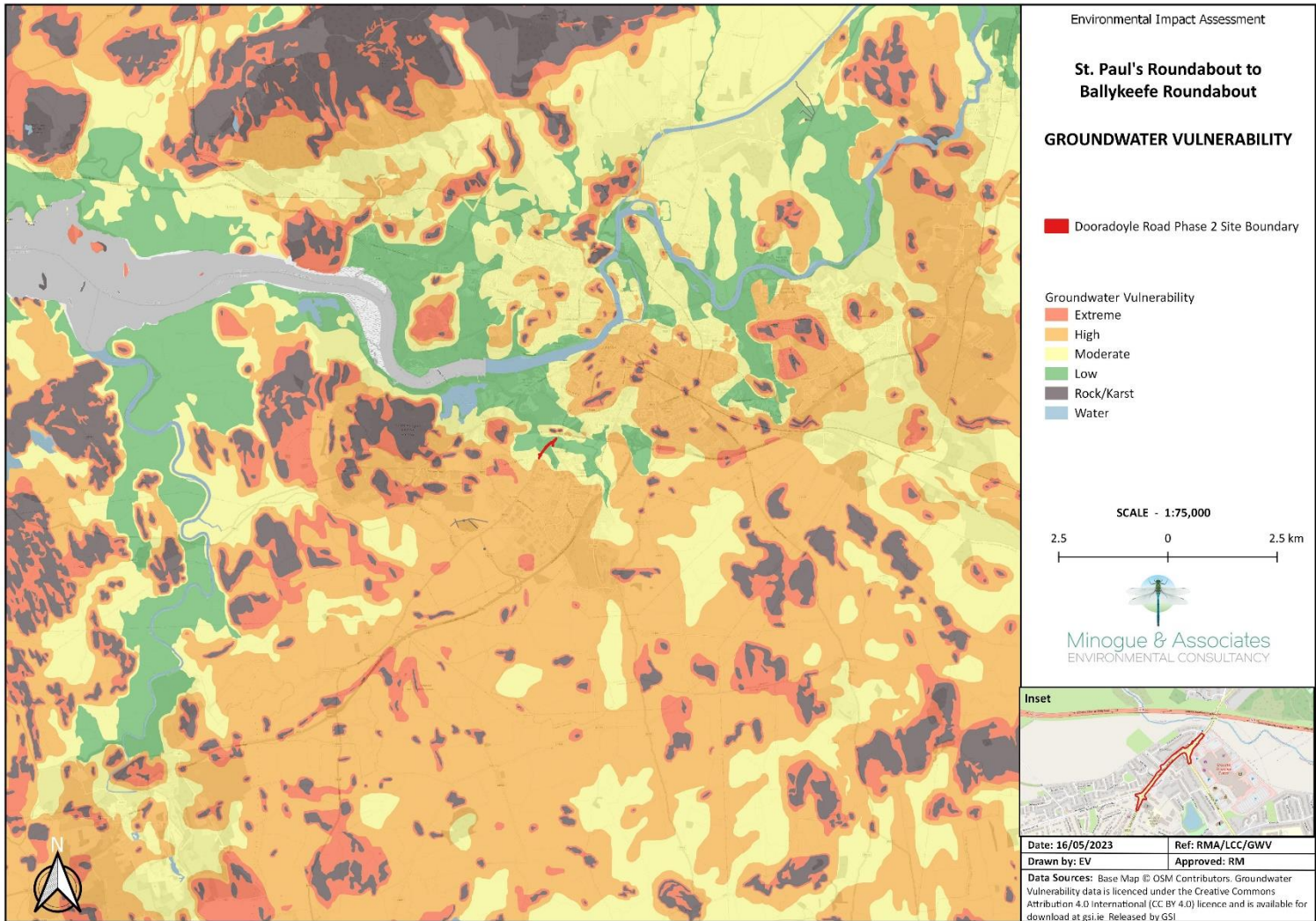


Figure 3-8 Air Quality (16<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> June) in Limerick (monitoring station Mungret)

### Air Quality Levels at People's Park, Limerick

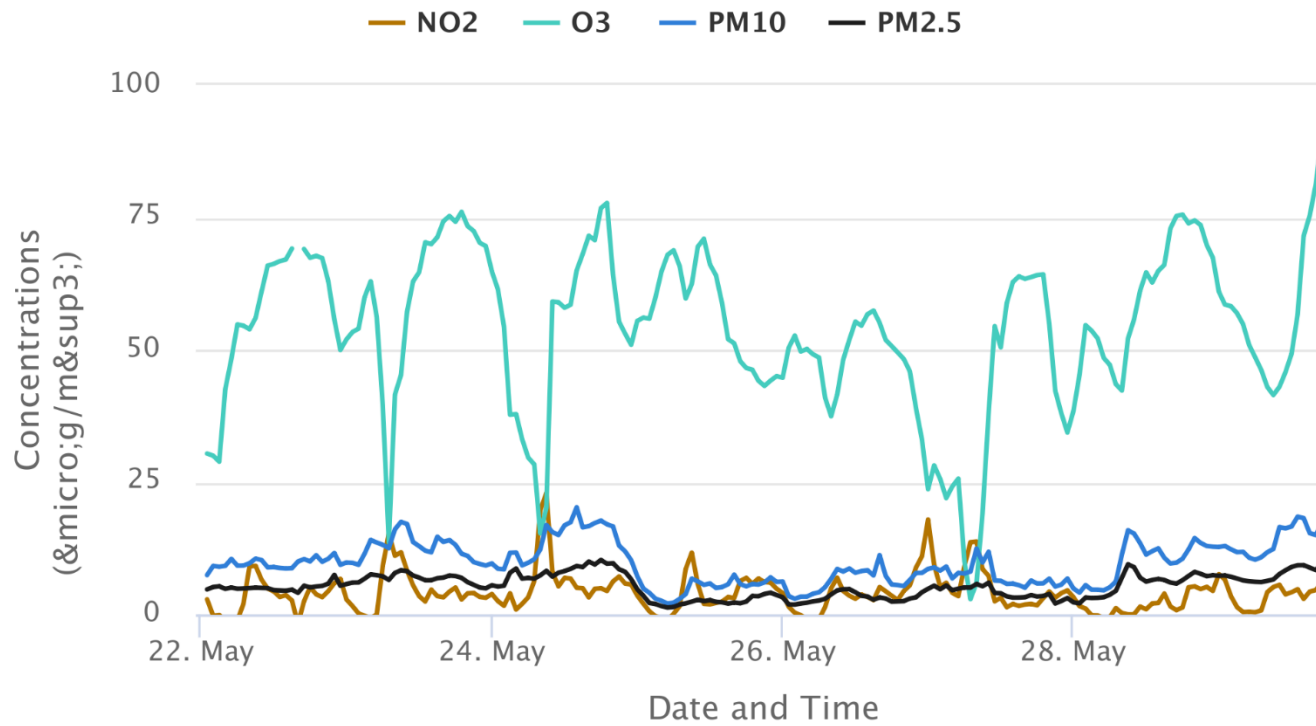




Figure 3-9 CORINE 2018 Land Cover for Project Area

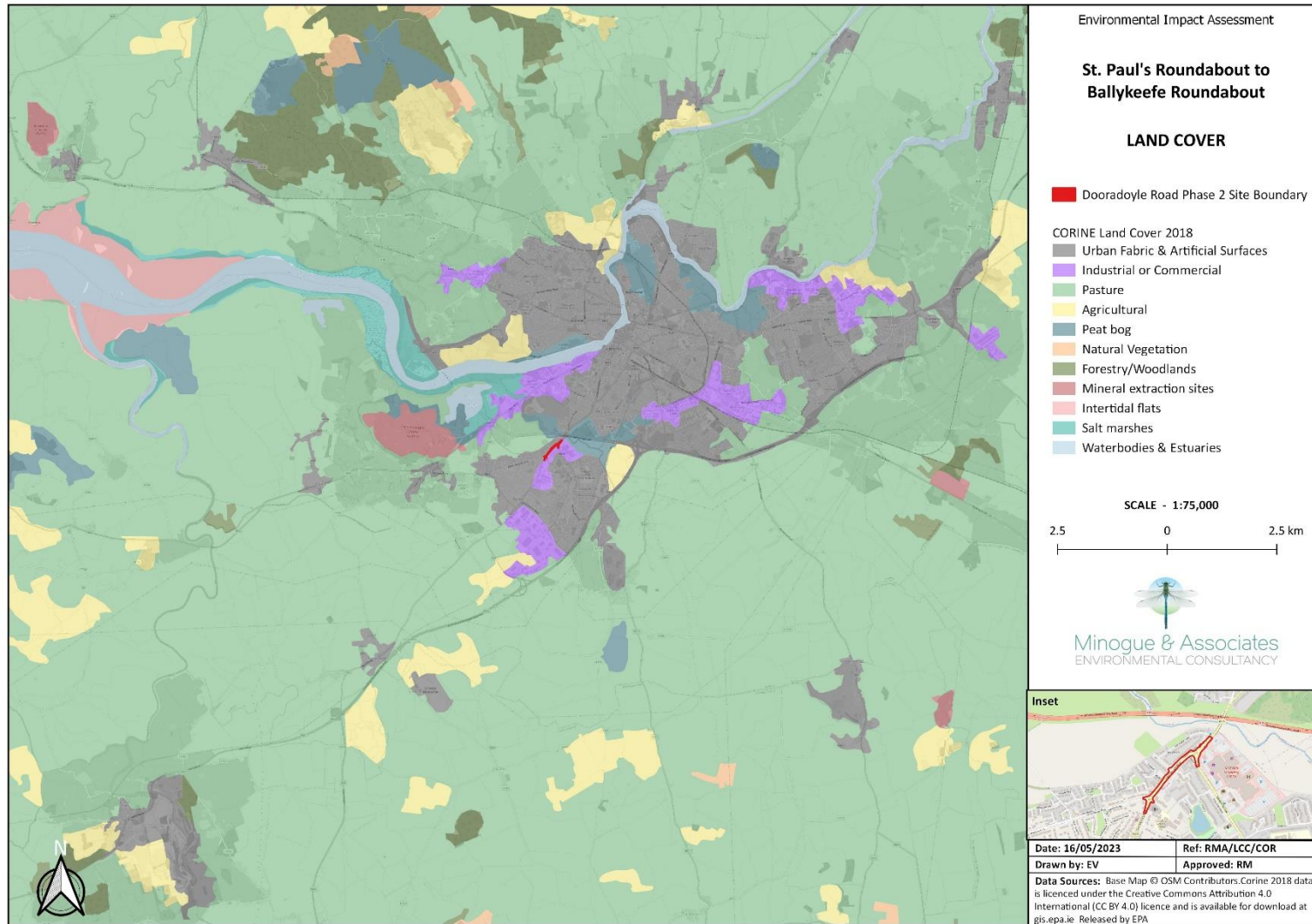
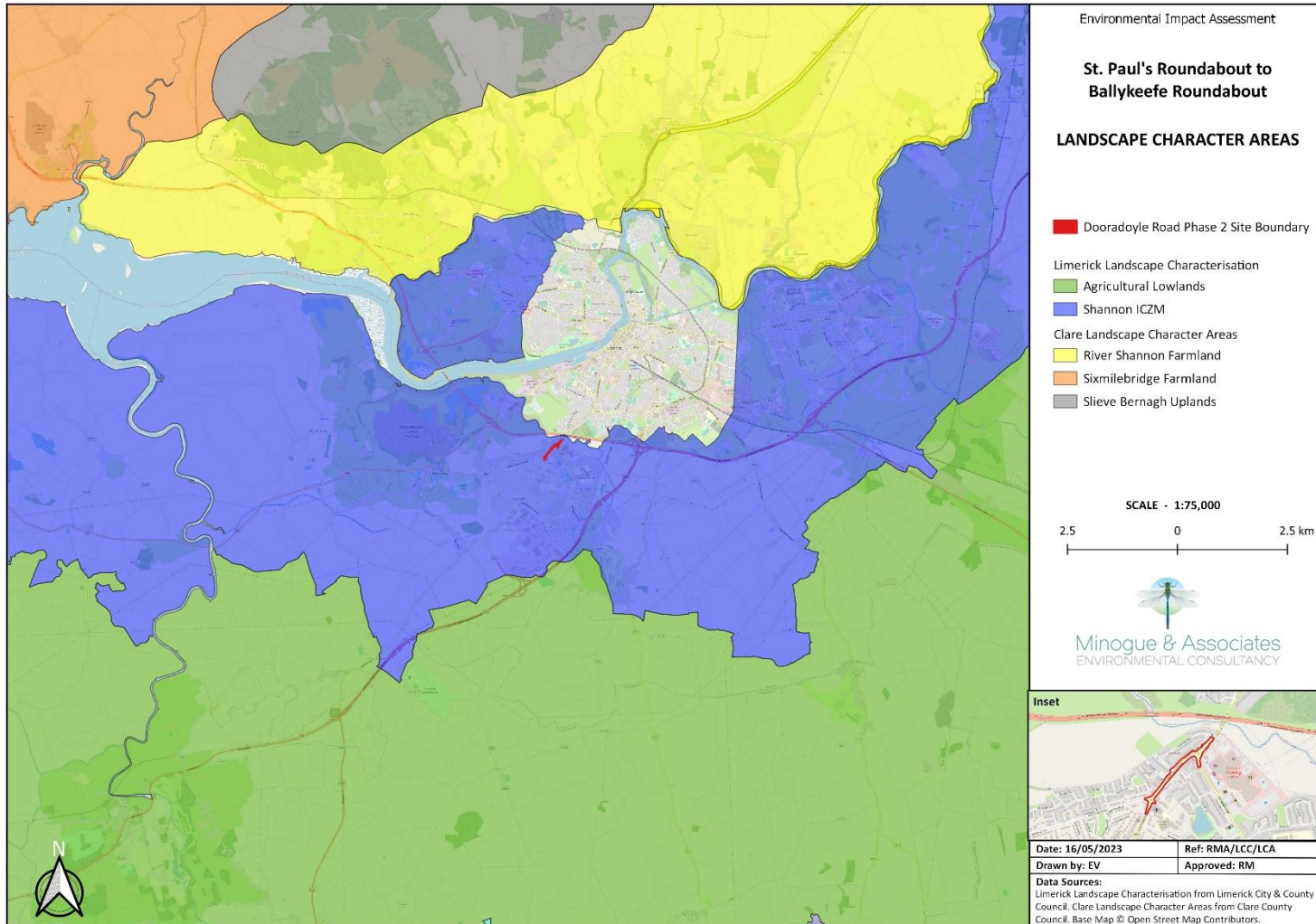


Figure 3-10 Landscape Classification



## 4 EIA SCREENING

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### 4.1 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE EIA SCREENING

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:

- Population and Human Health
- Biodiversity
- Land, Soils & Geology
- Water
- Air
- Climate
- Material Assets
- Cultural Heritage
- Landscape
- The interrelationships between the above factors

This EIA Screening report will therefore assess the development for potential impacts on the above parameters and against the criteria provided in Schedule 7a of the Regulations. The criteria contained in Schedule 7a can provide the basis for determining whether a proposed development may create significant impacts on the environment. The criteria are used to help in the screening process to determine whether a development is likely to have a significant effect on the environment. The criteria used in this EIA Screening Report are those listed in Annex III of the EIA Directive of 2014.

### 4.2 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 4.1
2. Characteristics of the Proposed Development - Table 4.2
3. Location of the Proposed Development - Table 4.3 and
4. Characteristics of Potential Impact Tables 4.4 and 4.5

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.

### 4.3 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 myplan.ie was consulted on the 28<sup>th</sup> May 2023 for the subject lands and immediate surrounds. A search was undertaken of the Limerick City and County Council planning website to identify developments with the potential for significant effects on environmental resources within the zone of influence of the proposed development within the past 3 years (2019 and onwards). Please see **Table 4.1** below.

*Table 4.1. Planning applications within the past five years*

Planning Reference	Outline of development	Planning status
20-165 (2020) Crescent College Comprehensive , Dooradoyle Co. Limerick.	Extension of existing secondary school building. Proposed works consist of a single storey standalone extension to the east of the existing school comprising of 5 no. specialist classrooms with associated prep and storage areas and ancillary accommodation, together with associated site works, including the reconfiguration of the existing carpark and construction access from the Dooradoyle Road	Granted
20-1239 Crescent College Comprehensive , Dooradoyle Co. Limerick.	Extension of the existing PE building. Proposed works consist of a single storey extension of 33sqm to the North of the existing school PE Hall comprising of 2no. accessible toilet/shower/changing facilities together with associated circulation and site works, including the relocation of the existing fire exit door from the PE Hall	Granted
20-644 Eochaill , Dooradoyle Road , Limerick	The demolition of the existing substandard dwelling house & garage and for the construction of a replacement two-storey dwelling house and all associated site works	Granted

None of the planning applications as listed here are significant in their scale, and are not expected to give rise to any impacts on environmental resources. There and there will be, similarly, no predicted cumulative impacts in relation to environmental resources, for example in terms of habitat loss or disturbance to, protected species as a result of the proposed development or emissions to water or air arising from same.

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. 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 4.2
2. Location of the Proposed Development - Table 4.3 and
3. Characteristics of Potential Impact - Tables 4.4 and 4.5

Table 4.2. 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 proposed scheme will provide high-quality cycling facilities on a section of the R526 St Nessans Road in the south Limerick environs. This area is c.510m in length, beginning at the southern end of St. Nessans Road - Father Russell Road roundabout, and commencing at the northern end next to Crescent Shopping Centre.  Of itself the project is not identified as giving rise to significant adverse environmental effects and positive effects relating to material assets, human health, local air quality. In addition, given its location and scale, nature and size of the proposed development no significant adverse effects are identified..
(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. Please see Table 4.1 for information on these projects. No significant environmental effects are identified from interaction or in combination with other existing or approved projects.
(c) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;	Due to the scale and nature of the project, minor volumes of natural resources will be used during the



Screening Question	Response
1. Characteristics of projects  The characteristics of projects must be considered, with particular regard to:	
	<p>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. The project accounts for suitable plant and construction materials (such as trucks and road sweeping) for the collection and disposal of waste.</p> <p>Likely significant effects on the environment are not identified.</p>
(e) pollution and nuisances;	<p>The construction phase involves the re-construction of the existing road surface to include the completion of the footpath and cycle track addition to the existing road facilities. The works will be undertaken in a number of phases to allow for access to existing properties and side roads and to facilitate pedestrian access.</p> <p>These phases will include some noise and vibration, as well as temporary restrictions on the usage of certain parts of the roads. Any wastes will be removed from the site to an authorised waste facility and is not expected to pollute the surrounding environment. The project is not expected to result in any likely significant effects on the environment.</p>
(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;	<p>The risks of major accidents are not considered to be significant subject to best construction practices being followed through the construction phase. The project will include proper site management, maintenance and operation of all machinery and works 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 of street infrastructure for public use. The project will improve</p>

Screening Question	Response
<p>1. Characteristics of projects</p> <p>The characteristics of projects must be considered, with particular regard to:</p>	
	<p>safety and visibility from proper segregation for various users of the road. The addition of the cycle-track facilities augment Limerick’s Sustainable Transport options.</p> <p>Given the above approaches the project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment</p>
<p>Will the proposed development create a significant amount of nuisance during its construction or operation?</p>	<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 4.3 . 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>For the purposes of this Part 8 consent process, the proposed project relates to the construction of a cycle track on St Nessans Road along a stretch of approximately 510m. This is an established and busy urban area that is not identified as supporting areas of environmental sensitivity. The hydrological connection between the Ballinacurra Creek and the Lower River Shannon and Shannon Estuary and Fergus Estuary SPA are considered in the Screening Statement for Appropriate Assessment. A finding of no significant effects on European sites has been concluded.</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 improves the utility of the realm rather than detracts from the urban landuse and public realm.</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 provision of the cycling facilities will involve an upgrade of the current road corridor to better accommodate pedestrian, cycling and vehicular provisions. This will be achieved by re-construction of the existing footpaths, construction of cycle tracks and narrowing of the existing road carriageway between the Saint Pauls and Ballykeeffe Roundabouts. The segregated cycle facilities on both sides of the road will be separated from the road carriageway by a 250mm wide upstand kerb.</p> <p>The project entails the removal of 21 existing trees, and will compensate for the removal by including landscaping works for new trees and shrubs with additional measures to preserve the remaining tree vegetation. Trees needed for removal are to facilitate the design layout.</p> <p style="background-color: yellow;">A bat roost potential survey was undertaken in May 2023 on trees for removal and although low roost potential for a number of trees, measures are provided to avoid effects on any potential roosting bats.</p> <p>The works will not impact the natural resources in the area and the underground due to the urban nature of the proposed route. 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 predicted to result in changes to the patterns of surface water runoff that currently exist. Surface water from the proposed footpaths and carriageways will drain to the existing surface and storm water network and significant volumes are not identified.</p> <p>A screening statement for Appropriate Assessment has been prepared by MEC Ltd 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>Most of the surface area in the vicinity of the project site is classified as <i>Moderate or poor</i> in quality under the Water Framework Directive. The closest surface water feature, Ballinacurra creek is approximately at distance of c. 225m from the project site. There are no direct or indirect effects identified for the project and the potential risks to these surface waters. The volumes of surface water draining the site will enter the existing surface water and stormwater system and represent a miniscule volume discharging to the River Shannon. 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.</p> <p>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 located on St Nessian's Road, approximately 4km away from Limerick City Centre.). The project is not expected to give rise to any long-term negative impacts to the users of the road or the people residing in the immediate vicinity of the project site.</p>

Screening Question	Response
	Positive effects relating to sustainable modes of transport are identified, which will result in safe, segregated use of the road and improved infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians.
(viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance	The project site does not have any relevant Architectural Conservation Area or protected buildings  Given the above approaches the project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment and is expected to enhance the public realm.

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

**Rationale:** Works entail an upgrade of the current road corridor to accommodate pedestrian, cycling and vehicular provisions on St Nessan’s Road in the greater Raheen/Dooradoyle area in the southwest of Limerick City. This will include the construction of segregated cycling facilities on both sides of the road, junction improvements, works to bus stops/lanes and pedestrian facilities.

The works as proposed in this development are considered to result in some temporary impacts in terms of noise and waste production, with positive effects associated with increased road safety for pedestrians and cyclists. The removal of the 12 trees from the vicinity and associated landscaping works to compensate are not expected to result in any likely significant effects.

The screening process assesses the most significant potential impacts in relation to the themes outlined below in Table 5.4 below. These are considered as follows:

#### 4.4 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 4.4 . Location of the Proposed Development

Environmental Topic	Potential Impact
Human Beings	<p>Potential temporary negative impacts to some residents in the area, associated with construction works.</p> <p>In and of itself, the effects of this particular project element are identified to be minor. The project does not result in likely significant negative effects on the environment in relation to Human Beings and is expected to result in long-term positive effects for the community in terms of safety from the segregation of road users.</p>
Flora and Fauna	<p>Temporary impacts associated with construction and longer-term operational impacts. Invasive species have been recorded within the wider area. Standard construction practices will apply and no additional soil is anticipated to be brought into the project from the wider area.</p> <p>The removal of the trees from the project site may result in habitat loss for nesting birds in the area but are expected to be compensated by the further landscaping works and mitigation measures to preserve the remaining vegetation.</p> <p>The project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment in relation to Flora and Fauna.</p>
Soil and Geology	<p>Permanent and minor negative impact related to works phase, particularly in relation to areas requiring the construction of a new carriageway surface. The project does not result in likely significant effects on soil and geology.</p>
Water	<p>The Ballinacurra creek is located over c.225m away from St Nessans Road. The volumes of surface water draining the project site will enter the existing surface water and stormwater system through existing gullies and represent a miniscule fraction of the volumes discharging to the Shannon River. There are no potential impacts identified for water quality or significant alterations to hydrological streams. The project does not result in likely significant effects on water resources in the environment.</p>
Air Quality and climate	<p>Localised impacts arising from machinery such as excavators. Emissions during works phase will be minimized through standard construction best practice. Traffic related emissions are not considered significant but are likely to remain the consistent with current emissions as the project will progress in phases to minimise disturbance to routine traffic flow.</p> <p>The project does not result in likely significant effects on the air quality and climate and will contribute positively at local scale by providing a larger space for pedestrians and attracting more cyclists due to the augmented cycling facilities.</p>
Noise and Vibration	<p>Noise during the construction phase may result in temporary and short-term nuisance but works will be undertaken within standard construction daytime hours. The project does not result in likely significant effects on the environment.</p>

Environmental Topic	Potential Impact
Cultural Heritage	The project does not significantly impact any cultural heritage on or near Dooradoyle Road..
Landscape	No significant alteration of landscape character in and of itself, as the area will retain its urban design and character; the proposed scheme will increase the space for pedestrians and cyclists. The removal of the trees to facilitate construction will be compensated with the addition of trees and shrubs at other viable points on the proposed track and is not expected to impact the visual aspects of the site. The project does not result in any significant negative effects on its surrounding landscape.
Interrelationship between above parameters	<p>The key interrelationship arises between Population and Human Health, Material Assets, and Landscape.</p> <p>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 material assets and the wellbeing of the residents and users of the road.</p>

**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. The surface run-off from the carriage-ways and footpaths will drain into existing gullies and is expected to be a negligent volume discharging into the Shannon River. The removal of the trees from the area will be compensated by addition of trees and shrubs at other viable points to preserve the overall landscape character of the area. No long-term adverse effects have been identified.

Table 4.5 . Location of the Proposed Development

<b>Characteristics of potential impacts</b> <b>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:</b>	
(a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	<p>Minor and localized temporary impacts are identified primarily at construction stage only.</p> <p>The geographic area of the proposed works are confined to the immediate route. Accordingly, there is no significant impact associated with the operational phase of the development.</p>
(b) the nature of the impact;	Impacts are identified as temporary as they relate to the construction stage and mitigation measures as shown in section 2.
(c) the transboundary nature of the impact;	There are no transboundary impacts identified for the proposed project.
(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 Population and Human Health, particularly noise in the initial stages of the project, but contributes positively in the longer-term for public safety. Given the scale, size and nature of the project no significant effects are identified.
(e) the probability of the impact;	The design of the proposals, best practice construction measures, the scale, nature and design of the projects 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.
(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. Please see Table 4.1 for information on these projects. 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 limited.
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**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. The scale, nature, design and location of the project is not identified as giving rise to significant negative effects across the EIA topics.

#### 4.4.1 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:

- Limerick City Development Plan 2022-2028 SEA ER and Natura Impact Report

The SEA ER and NIR do not provide specific mitigation measures or commentary on St Nessans Road cycleway proposals. The enhancement of cycling and improved permeability is provided under the following Objective ECON 04:

Objective ECON 04 Dooradoyle Urban Quarter: It is an objective of the Council

- a) Promote the continued development of lands around the Dooradoyle District Centre and adjoining lands as a Strategic Employment Location through the delivery of additional office-based employment uses in a phased manner in conjunction with supporting infrastructure development.
- b) Promote improvements to connectivity, signage and permeability within the wider area including pedestrian and cycle facilities linking to Portland Park and provide for the link road from Dooradoyle Road to Rosbrien Road.
- c) Facilitate the early upgrading of the existing flood defence infrastructure, thus ensuring the long-term flood protection of the wider lands in Dooradoyle in a manner compatible with any future City-Wide Flood Relief Scheme.

d) Ensure any application on lands at risk of flooding is accompanied by a Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment which shall demonstrate that any development does not result in additional significant flood risk in the area and does not impede the future delivery of a wider flood relief scheme for Limerick. This FRA shall also include a detailed Emergency Response Plan and a Breach Modelling Assessment using a methodology to be agreed in advance with LCCC.

e) Require an overall framework plan/ masterplan to be prepared for the lands in advance of, or as part of, any application for a portion of the currently undeveloped lands.

## 5 CONCLUSION

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### 5.1 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.*

This EIA Screening Report has concluded that the effects of the proposed development are not identified as giving rise to significant negative effects on the environment, due to the scale, nature, location and design of the proposed development.

The implementation of the standard environmental management practices will also provide safeguards in relation to potential impacts identified in the preceding tables, which are identified as temporary and minor in nature.

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 low. No significant environmental impacts will occur once mitigation measures outlined in Section 2 of this Report are implemented. These mitigation measures are representative of standard industry environmental management that are implemented to minimise the impact of projects to the environment.

The information provided in this EIA Screening Report can be used by the competent authority Limerick City and 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.