

Housing development, Ardagh, Co. Limerick

EIAR Screening Report

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Final

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This report describes work commissioned by Limerick City and County Council, by a letter dated 08/03/2021. Conor O'Neill of JBA Consulting carried out this work.

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Purpose

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Abbreviations

AA - Appropriate Assessment
AIA - Archaeological Impact Assessment
CEMP - Construction and Environmental Management Plan
EIAR - Environmental Impact Assessment Report
LAP - Local Area Plan
LCCC - Limerick City and County Council
NIAH - National Inventory of Architectural Heritage
NMS - National Monuments Service
SFRA - Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
WFD - Water Framework Directive

1 Introduction

JBA Consulting Engineers and Scientists Ltd. (hereafter JBA) has been commissioned by Limerick City and County Council to prepare an EIAR Screening Report for a proposed housing development at O'Connor Park, Ardagh, Co. Limerick (the 'proposed development'). The proposed development consists of 10 no. homes, parking area, and green spaces.

1.1 Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is to identify whether there is a need under the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, for an EIAR for the proposed development.

Schedule 5 (Parts 1 and 2) of the Act lists the groups of development projects which are subject to EIAR screening under the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU. Part 1 lists those projects which are automatically subject to an EIAR due to the scale and nature of the project. Part 2 lists projects which are also likely to have significant environmental effects based on the nature and size of the development set out by threshold criteria.

An additional group of projects, which are considered sub-threshold developments under Part 2, may fall below the thresholds set but may, under further analysis, be deemed to have significant effects due to their location within a catchment, size, or proximity to sensitive areas.

This report documents the methodology employed to determine whether the proposed development falls under any of these groups, and therefore will have significant environmental impacts. Rationale has been given for the decision made in reference to the relevant legislation, and additional documents have been referenced where required.

This report is intended for the project as described below. Any significant changes to the project description or location would require preparation of a new EIAR screening report.

An Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report has been prepared by JBA Consulting and has identified any potential impacts to Natura 2000 sites and protected landscapes. This EIAR Screening document, along with the AA Screening Report, will be submitted as part of the planning process for the proposed development.

2 Description of Proposed Works

2.1 Site Location

The location for the development is O'Connor Park, Ardagh, Co. Limerick. The proposed housing development will be spread over one plot shown below in Figure 2.1, on an open space site with existing housing to the east and the R521 road to the west. Green fields are to the north and south. The site is approximately 0.40 hectares.



Figure 2.1: Site Location

2.2 Proposed Development

The proposed development comprises:

- Provision of 10 homes, in the following breakdown: 2 no. 3 bed houses, 4 no. 2 bed houses, and 4 no. 1 bed duplexes;
- Footpaths linking into existing pedestrian pathways at O'Connor Park, and the provision of new car parking (17 no. spaces);
- Hard and soft landscaping including front and rear garden walls, tree planting, and natural grass areas;
- Removal of a section of hedgerow along the R521, to facilitate construction of an entrance and sightlines;
- Construction of and/or remedial works to boundaries with adjacent sites;
- Construction of foul and surface water and associated drainage works;
- All associated site works.

The proposed site layout plan is shown in Figure 2.2.



Figure 2.2: Proposed site plan

3 Purpose of Screening

3.1 Legislative Context for EIAR in Ireland

The EU has set out mandatory requirements for Environmental Impact Assessments under the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU (as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU). The Directive identifies certain project types, described under Annex I, that will always have significant environmental effects due to their nature and size. These projects are required to undergo an EIAR in every Member State.

For projects listed under Annex II, the EIA Directive gives Member States discretion to decide the limits of projects requiring an EIAR. In Ireland, mandatory thresholds have been set for projects that would otherwise fall under Annex II, which are described in Schedule 5 of The Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended. These thresholds are based on project characteristics including size and location. Projects within these thresholds are always subject to an EIAR. In some circumstances, projects considered below the thresholds set under Schedule 5 Part 2 may still be considered by the Planning Authority to have significant effects on the environment, such as in cases where the projects are in a location of particular environmental sensitivity and may also be subject to an EIAR. These sub-threshold projects are reviewed by the Planning Authority on a case-by-case basis.

The principal piece of legislation under which an EIAR may be undertaken for various developments is The Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. Further regulations are explained in The Planning and Development (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2001-2018.

Legislation is examined below as to whether an EIAR will be required for this project.

3.2 The Planning and Development Act 2000 - Mandatory EIAR

The Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, Section 172 sets out the types of projects that require an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR):

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

- a. the proposed development would be of a class specified in
 - i. Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, and either-
 - I. such development would exceed any relevant quantity, area or other limit specified in that Part, or
 - II. no quantity, area or other limit is specified in that Part in respect of the development concerned, or
 - ii. Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 and either-
 - I. such development would exceed any relevant quantity, area or other limit specified in that Part, or
 - II. no quantity, area or other limit is specified in that Part in respect of the development concerned, or
- b.
 - i. the proposed development would be of a class specified in Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 but does not exceed the relevant quantity, area or other limit specified in that Part, and
 - ii. the planning authority or the Board, as the case may be, determines that the proposed development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

3.2.1 Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2018

Projects which fall under Schedule 5, Part 1 are typically large infrastructure and energy projects and by their nature will always have significant environmental effects. The proposed residential development does not fall under Schedule 5, Part 1.

3.2.2 Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2018

With regards to Part 2 projects, the categories and thresholds were examined for the following category:

10. Infrastructure projects

- (a) Industrial estate development projects, where the area would exceed 15 hectares.
 - (b) (i) Construction of more than 500 dwelling units.
 - (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.)

The proposed development will consist of 8 dwelling units (less than 500 dwelling units in 10(b)(i) above) and the site area is 0.45 ha (below the thresholds in 10(b)(iv) above). It does not fall under any of the other categories above. Therefore, an EIAR has not been automatically triggered for this proposed development.

However, it is necessary to consider if this development could result in significant environmental effects under the category of sub-threshold developments.

3.3 Sub-threshold EIAR

In accordance with the requirement to submit an EIAR with sub-threshold planning application (Article 103 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2018), where a planning application for sub-threshold development is not accompanied by an EIAR, and the Planning Authority considers that the development is likely to have significant effects on the environment it shall, by notice in writing, require the applicant to submit an EIAR. This process therefore occurs after submission of an application, if that application is not accompanied by an EIAR.

The decision as to whether a development is likely to have ‘significant effects’ on the environment must be taken with reference to the criteria set out in Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2018. Schedule 7A requires that the following information be provided for the purposes of screening sub-threshold development for EIAR:

1. A description of the proposed development, including in particular—
 - a) a description of the physical characteristics of the whole proposed development and, where relevant, of demolition works, and
 - b) a description of the location of the proposed development, with regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected.
2. A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development.
3. A description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, of the proposed development on the environment resulting from—
 - a) the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant, and
 - b) the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity.
 - c) The compilation of the information at paragraphs 1 to 3 shall take into account, where relevant, the criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2018 (DHPLG 2018).

In order to assist planning and other consenting authorities in deciding if significant effects on the environment are likely to arise in the case of development below the national mandatory EIAR thresholds, the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government published a Guidance document in August 2003, the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development and the Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (DHPLG 2018b)

The criteria, as transposed in Irish legislation, are grouped under three headings:

- i. Characteristics of Proposed Development
- ii. Location of Proposed Development
- iii. Characteristics of Potential Impacts

For the purposes of assessing if the development is likely to have significant effects on the environment in reference to these three parameters, the project is examined below in further detail.

4 Overview of Environmental Impacts

An overview of the potential environmental impacts of the development, according to theme presented in an EIAR, is provided below.

4.1 Population and Human Health

The development will provide no more than 10-12 houses, in keeping with the objectives for Tier 5 small villages in the Limerick City and County Development Plan 2010-2016. This will result in a positive impact to local population through the provision of new modern housing.

There is a risk to the health and safety of workers on the development, as with any construction project. This will be mitigated against by the operational plans devised by the contractor. No impacts to human health are expected as a result of the operation of the development.

4.2 Biodiversity

Ecological receptors that must be examined include protected Natura 2000 sites under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and Birds Directive (2009/147/EC), as well as species protected under the Wildlife Act (1976), and any ecological receptors which may be negatively impacted by the proposed development, both directly and indirectly.

4.2.1 Proximity to Protected Sites

An Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening has been completed by JBA Consulting for this project to determine whether there is a potential for impacts on nearby Natura 2000 sites.

Those sites within 10km of the proposed development are shown in Table 4.1. The AA Screening determined that there are no likely significant impacts on any Natura 2000 sites as a result of the proposed development.

Table 4.1: Natura 2000 sites within 10km of the proposed development, extended downstream of the Ardagh WWTP

Natura 2000 site	Site Code	Direct distance from site	Distance via nearest watercourse (approx.)
Stack's to Mullaghareirk Mountains, West Limerick Hills and Mount Eagle SPA	004161	1.5km	Not connected
Lower River Shannon SAC	002165	8.6km	25.0km
River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA	004077	11.1km	23.2km

4.2.2 Other Ecological Receptors

The site is dominated by dry meadows with two hedgerows running along the northern and western site boundaries. Ecological receptors include breeding birds which nest in hedgerows between March and September, commuting bat species which use hedgerows as navigational features and foraging/commuting mammals which shelter in hedgerows and forage within the long grass of dry meadows.

A portion of the western hedgerow will be removed as part of the proposed development. The removal of this section will not be significant, given the large amount of hedgerow habitat in the area.

4.3 Soils and Geology

The underlying bedrock of the site is composed of undifferentiated limestone.

The Teagasc soil database indicates that the site is underlain mainly by a poorly drained mineral soil. There is a small area of Made Ground at the eastern edge of the site and a smaller section of well drained mineral soil in the western edge of the site. The underlying quaternary sediment is limestone till.

Fill material required will be sourced locally where possible, and will be pre-screened for invasive species or other contamination.

4.4 Hydrology and Hydrogeology

4.4.1 Surface Water

The proposed site lies within the Water Framework Directive (WFD) Shannon Estuary South catchment and Deel [Newcastlewest]_SC_040 sub-catchment (EPA, 2020). There are no watercourses within the site boundary; the closest to the site is the Slewaun Stream (north branch), flowing in a northeasterly direction approximately 470m north of the site boundary. The stream does not have a WFD status.

During construction, there is the potential for emissions of dust and silt into surface waterways. This could therefore lead to a reduction in water quality if contamination reaches waterbodies. This is considered unlikely given the distance between the site and any surface watercourses, and the nature of the proposed development.

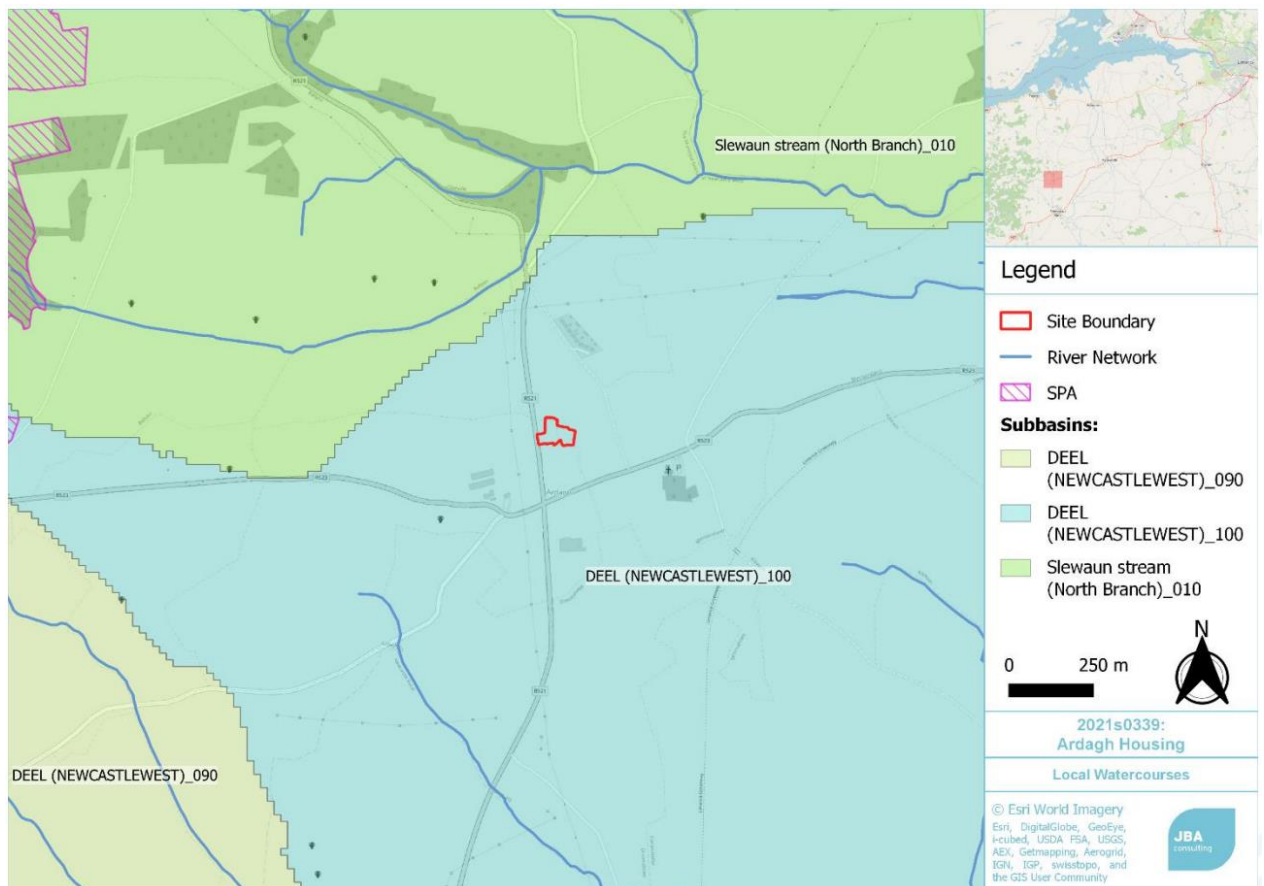


Figure 4.1: Surface waterbodies near the proposed development

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) was completed as part of the Limerick CDP in 2018. The development site is outside Flood Zones A (1 in 100-chance in any given year) and B (1 in 1000 chance).

4.4.2 Groundwater

The groundwater body (IE_SH_G_203, Charleville) underlying the site is Good status and under Review. Groundwater vulnerability, a measure of the likelihood of groundwater contamination occurring, within the site varies from 'Extreme' to 'High', as classified by the Geological Survey Ireland (GSI, 2020).

Groundwater vulnerability underlying the site is extreme, indicating a high likelihood of groundwater contamination by human activities. However, mitigation measures to combat this, such as following best practice guidance regarding work near watercourses and the control of silt and sediments (i.e., C532 Control of water pollution from construction sites: Guidance for consultants and contractors, and C515 Groundwater control – design and practice, 2nd ed.), will be outlined in the operating plans to be developed on-site by the appointed contractor. The risk of groundwater contamination will only be present during the construction phase of the development; once operational, the development is unlikely to result in hydrological impacts.

4.5 Cultural Heritage

There are no archaeological features or protected structures within or directly bordering the proposed site. The town of Ardagh south of the proposed development is however classified as a National Monuments Service Zone of Notification as a historic town. The proposed development boundary is outside this Zone.

A preliminary desktop archaeological impact assessment (AIA) was completed by the LCCC Executive Archaeologist. Due to the proximity of the development to the Historic Town of Ardagh, it is recommended that archaeological test trenching be carried out in advance of final design.

4.6 Air and Climate

There is potential for impacts to air quality through emissions during the construction phase of the development, due to the operation of machinery on site and transport of materials to and from the site. These impacts will be mitigated against with measures outlined in the contractor's operating plans.

The proposed development will not give rise to any significant impacts on air quality or climate during operational period.

4.7 Noise and Vibration

There is potential for localised noise and vibration impacts during the construction phase due to operation of machinery on site. These impacts would be temporary and only during the construction phase. Mitigation measures against such impacts will be outlined in the operating plans to be devised by the contractor.

The proposed development will not lead to any significant noise or vibration impacts during operational period.

4.8 Landscape and Visual

The proposed development will give rise to temporary landscape or visual impacts to residents living in proximity to the development during the construction phase.

There are no protected landscapes or views in proximity to the site.

When constructed, the proposed development will be low in landscape and visual impact for surrounding landowners, and will be in character with the surrounding landscape. A landscape design scheme has been prepared for the proposed development, the planting proposals will mitigate visual impacts of the development and enhance the overall residential amenity of the area.

4.9 Material Assets including Traffic, Utilities, and Waste

4.9.1 Traffic

There may be some localised impacts on traffic associated with the construction phase of the development. These will be temporary and limited in duration.

Once operational, the proposed development may create minor additional traffic and parking demand in the immediate area. There is sufficient car parking included in the proposed development to accommodate this demand.

4.9.2 Utilities

Foul water drainage will, subject to confirmation from Irish Water, connect into the existing foul sewer at O'Connor Park (Appendix A).

Surface water from roofs, pavements and gardens shall be conveyed to a new surface water sewer, and from there to existing surface sewer at O'Connor Park (Appendix A).

Gas and electricity services are subject to applications which will be made to An Bord Gáis and the ESB.

4.9.3 Waste

During construction, a waste management plan will be devised and implemented by the contractor on site.

Once operational, the proposed development will generate household waste, which will be collected and disposed of at appropriate licensed facilities.

4.10 Cumulative Impacts

4.10.1 Plans

Limerick City and Council Development Plan 2010-2016

Limerick City and County Development Plan 2010-2016, in effect until a new Development Plan is prepared, has been prepared in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000. The plan sets out the overall strategy for planning and sustainable development in the county.

Ardagh is listed in Tier 5: Small Villages, of the Settlement Structure. No one development in this tier should be greater than 10-12 homes; the proposed development does not exceed this amount.

The proposed development is in line with objectives for the development of Tier 5 Small Villages.

4.10.2 Projects

There are several other recent developments or planning applications in the vicinity of the proposed project. Larger development planning applications in the near vicinity from the last three years that have been granted permission are listed below. Applications for home extensions, internal alterations and retention are not considered.

Planning Application Reference	18844
Development address	Reerasta, Ardagh, Co. Limerick
Description:	the refurbishment of the existing house, the construction of a 2-storey extension to the rear of the house, a porch to the front of the house, and a wastewater treatment system and polishing filter and all ancillary site works.
Final Decision on Application	Grant permission
Decision Date	12-Oct-2018

Planning Application Reference	191063
Development address	Ardvone, Ardagh, Co. Limerick
Description:	a two-storey dwelling house, detached domestic garage, new entrance walls, installation of mechanical aeration unit with polishing filter system with all associated site works.
Final Decision on Application	Grant permission
Decision Date	18-Dec-2019

Planning Application Reference	20190
Development address	Cross, Ardagh, Co. Limerick
Description:	construction of dwelling house, detached garage and new entrance, together with all associated site works.
Final Decision on Application	Grant permission
Decision Date	11-Jun-2020

The potential for cumulative impact of the plans and projects identified above are assessed in the Screening section below in combination with the currently proposed project.

5 Screening Assessment

5.1 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

To determine whether the characteristics of the proposed development are likely to have significant impacts on the environment, the following questions are answered in Table 5.1, following guidelines set out in Guidance for Consenting Authorities regarding Sub-Threshold Development (DoEHLG 2003).

Table 5.1: Characteristics of the proposed development

Characteristics of the Proposed Development - Screening Questions	Comment
Could the scale (size or design) of the proposed development be considered significant?	No. The proposed development is 0.40 hectares in size and is comprised of one- and two-storey homes. The surrounding houses are also a mix of one- and two-storey houses. As the proposed development will fit in scale with the existing residential area, it is not considered to be significant.
Considered cumulatively with other adjacent proposed developments, would the size of the proposed development be considered significant?	No. The size of the development is considered small. An existing development of similar extent is situated to the southeast of the site. A number of planning applications have been granted permission in the area around the proposed development in the last three years, or are currently in progress. The applications are all small scale. As such, the cumulative effect of these is not expected to be significant.
Will the proposed development utilise a significant quantity of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water or biodiversity?	No. In terms of land area, the proposed development is small (0.40ha), and much of the area will be dedicated to open space. The water consumption will be limited to household use for 8 homes. An area of dry meadow will be removed for the development. This area is small, with other similar habitats surrounding the site. The established hedgerow on the northern boundary will be retained as boundary treatment, while a small section of hedgerow to the west will be removed. This is not significant in the context of the surrounding area.
Will the proposed development produce a significant quantity of waste?	No. Waste will be produced during the construction phase of the development. During this phase, should excavated materials require off-site removal, they will be tested to determine the most appropriate means of disposal, and disposed of at appropriately licenced or permitted sites. This will be detailed in the contractor's operating plans. During operation, the proposed development will produce household waste, which will be collected and disposed of at appropriate facilities.
Will the proposed development create a significant amount or type of pollution?	No. Temporary air and noise pollution may occur during the construction phase, but will be mitigated against by operational plans devised by the contractor.

Will the proposed development create a significant amount of nuisance?	No. During construction, some noise will be created, however this will be temporary and short-term. Construction works will be limited to certain times of day to avoid nuisance to local residences. Once operational, the proposed development will not produce a significant amount of nuisance.
Will there be a risk of major accidents having regard to substances or technologies used?	No. The risks of this development will be those typically associated with normal construction practices. Construction machinery will be used during the construction phase and will be operated by licensed contractors, and following best practice guidance.
Will there be a risk of natural disasters which are relevant to the project, including those caused by climate change?	The proposed development is outside the CFRAM Flood Zone A and B extents. Risk of natural disasters to the project is therefore low.
Will there be a risk to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution)?	No. Any potential risk to human health will be as a result of the construction phase of this project. All contractors will be subject to best practice methodologies and risk assessments in order to minimize any risk to human health.
Would any combination of the above factors be considered likely to have significant effects on the environment?	No. The development is relatively small scale. Environmental impacts are predictable and easily mitigated through the use of best practice guidelines during the construction phase. As such, significant impacts on the environment are not expected as a result of the proposed development.

Conclusion: The characteristics of the proposed development are not considered likely to result in a significant impact on the environment by virtue of its size, nature or operational activities.

Reasoning: The proposed housing development is relatively small in extent. Any environmental or noise impacts will be during the construction phase and not during operation of the development. Construction will not require significant use of natural resources, nor will it generate significant amounts of waste.

5.2 Location of the Proposed Development

The following questions are answered below in Table 5.2 to determine whether the geographical location of the proposed development can be considered ecologically or environmentally sensitive.

Table 5.2: Location of the proposed development

Location of the Proposed Development - Screening Questions	Comment
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any site designated for conservation interest (e.g., SAC, SPA, pNHA)?	No. The AA Screening for the site concluded that there are no Natura 2000 sites likely to be directly or indirectly impacted by the development.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any habitats listed as Annex I in the EU Habitats Directive?	No. The AA Screening for the site found no potential impacts on habitats listed as Annex I in the EU Habitats Directive.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any habitats listed as Priority Annex I in the EU Habitats Directive?	No. The AA Screening for the site found no potential impacts on habitats listed as Priority Annex I in the EU Habitats Directive.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any species listed as Annex II in the EU Habitats Directive?	No. The AA Screening for the site found no potential impacts on species listed as Annex II in the EU Habitats Directive.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on the breeding places of any species protected under the Wildlife Act?	No. Established hedgerow on the northern boundary of the site, which could support breeding birds, will be retained. Any vegetation removal which is required will be carried out outside the bird nesting season, i.e., outside March-September.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on the existing or approved land use?	No. The proposed development is in line with the approved land use under the LCCC CDP.
Has the proposed development the potential to significantly impact directly or indirectly the relative abundance, availability, quality or regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground?	<p>No. The proposed development will not impact the relative abundance, availability, or regenerative capacity of natural resources. There will be a small amount of surface runoff, however this will be countered by the retention of large green areas around the site.</p> <p>During construction there is a risk of encounters with groundwater. Controls should be put in place by the appointed contractor in case this occurs. These should include: the erection of a bund or barrier around any excavated area until the attenuation system is in place and the area made good, the storage of fuel oils on site should be located in a compound as far from any excavated area as possible, and no washout of concrete trucks or material should take place in the area.</p>
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any protected structures or Recorded Monuments	No. There are no recorded archaeological or architectural features on site or in the near vicinity of the proposed development.

and Places of Archaeological Interest?	Advance archaeological test trenching should be carried out across the proposed development area, in line with a recommendation from the LCCC Executive Archaeologist.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on listed or scenic views or protected landscapes as outlined in the County Development Plan?	No.

Conclusion: The location of the proposed development is not considered likely to result in a significant impact on the environment.

Reasoning: The proposed development is located in an appropriately zoned area. There are no Natura 2000 sites or designated ecological sites which will be impacted by the proposed development. The possibility of impacts to groundwater can be mitigated by the implementation of groundwater protections during construction by the appointed contractor. A small area of dry meadow and hedgerow will be removed for the development, however the northern hedgerow bordering the site will be retained.

5.3 Characteristics of Potential Impacts

The following questions were answered in Table 5.3, in line with Guidance on EIA Screening - June 2001, prepared for the European Commission by ERM (UK), to determine whether the environmental impacts of the development can be considered significant.

Table 5.3: Characteristics of potential impacts

Characteristics of Potential Impacts - Screening Questions	Comment
Will there be a large change in environmental conditions?	No. The area to be developed is small (0.40 hectares), with approximately half of the site to be retained as green open space.
Will new features be out of scale with the existing environment?	No. The proposed development is set to the same scale as the existing housing developments in the area and thus will not be out of place in the local environment.
Will the effect be particularly complex?	No. The primary environmental impacts are expected to occur during the construction phase, and will be mitigated by operational plans devised by the on-site contractor. These include temporary impacts to surface water quality, air quality, noise and vibration, and through the generation of waste.
Will the effect extend over a large area?	No. Given the small scale and nature of the proposed development this is highly unlikely.
Will there be any potential for trans-frontier impacts?	No.
Will many people be affected?	Only residents and business owners in the local vicinity will be affected by the construction phase, however such impacts will be temporary.
Will many receptors of other types (fauna and flora, businesses, facilities) be affected?	No. Impacts on other receptors are expected to be temporary and limited to the construction phase. Once operational, impacts to receptors are expected to be negligible.
Will valuable or scarce features or resources be affected?	No. There will be no effect on scarce features or resources including protected habitats and species, monuments, or protected buildings.
Is there a risk that environmental standards will be breached?	No. The appointed contractor will be contractually obligated to follow environmental guidance and standards, which will be outlined in the contract documents and operating plans devised for construction.
Is there a risk that protected sites, areas, features will be affected?	No.
Is there a high probability of the effect occurring?	No.
Will the effect continue for a long time?	No. Potential impacts would be brief to temporary, only occurring occasionally within the construction phase of the development or in the case of a breach of environmental standards.
Will the effect be permanent rather than temporary?	No. Potential impacts would be temporary.
Will the impact be continuous rather than intermittent?	No. Potential impacts would be intermittent.

If it is intermittent, will it be frequent rather than rare?	No. Potential impacts would be rare, occurring only in the case of accidental breach of environmental standards during the construction phase.
Will the impacts be irreversible?	No.
Will it be difficult to avoid, or reduce or repair or compensate for the effect?	No. Mitigation measures to be put in place during construction will be sufficient to avoid or reduce potential impacts.

Conclusions: The characteristics of the potential impacts as a result of the proposed development are unlikely to be significant and are easily mitigated.

Reasoning: The potential impacts from this development would be primarily during the construction phase. It is easy to predict these impacts and mitigate them through the use of standard environmental procedures.

6 Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this report was to identify whether there is a need under The Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, for an EIAR for the proposed housing development at O'Connor Park, Ardagh, Co. Limerick.

The proposed development consists of 10 no. homes in a variety of types.

It was determined that the proposed development does not fall under Schedule 5 (Parts 1 and 2) of the Act. As such, an EIAR has not been automatically triggered. To determine whether the development may fall under the category of Sub-threshold development, with the potential to give rise to significant environmental effects, a screening exercise was undertaken.

During construction, typical impacts such as noise, dust, traffic disruption, and the generation of small amounts of waste are to be expected. These are typical construction phase impacts, and will be mitigated against by environmental operating plans devised by the on-site contractor, following best practice guidance.

There is the potential for encounters with groundwater during construction. It is recommended that controls be put in place by the appointed contractor in case this occurs. These should include:

- the erection of a bund or barrier around any excavated area;
- the storage of fuel oils on site should be located in a compound as far from the excavated area as possible;
- no washout of concrete trucks or material should take place in the area.

An AA Screening Report completed by JBA for the proposed development determined that no likely significant impacts are expected as a result of the proposed development. This is due to the small size of the development and the distance and lack of pathways to Natura 2000 sites.

Established hedgerow on the northern boundary of the site will be retained. Vegetation removal which is required on the western boundary will take place outside the bird nesting season (March-September).

A preliminary desktop AIA recommended that advance archaeological test trenching be carried out prior to final design.

Once operational, the proposed development is expected to be low in environmental impact. There are similarly sized residential developments in the surrounding area, and the development includes open green spaces.

It has been concluded that the proposed development does not fall under the category of sub-threshold development, and thus an EIAR is not required.

The overall conclusion is based on the details of the scheme available at the time of preparation of this report. If the extent of the scheme or the construction methods for the scheme are changed then the EIAR Screening assessment should be reviewed.

7 References

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (2020) EPA Maps, Next Generation EPA Maps, available: <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/> [accessed 01 Apr 2021]

Appendices

A Proposed drainage layout



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