



Article 6 (3) Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

Proposed Housing
Development, Newcastle
West, Co. Limerick





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Limerick City & County Council

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Limerick**

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

MKO has been appointed to provide the information necessary to allow the competent authority to conduct an Article 6(3) Screening for Appropriate Assessment of a proposed residential development in Newcastle West, Co. Limerick.

Screening for Appropriate Assessment is required under Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive). Where it cannot be excluded that a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, would have a significant effect on a European Site then same shall be subject to an appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. The current project is not directly connected with, or necessary for, the management of any European Site consequently the project has been subject to the Appropriate Assessment Screening process.

The assessment in this report is based on a desk study and field surveys undertaken during October 2019 and May 2021. It specifically assesses the potential for the proposed development to result in significant effects on European sites in the absence of any best practice, mitigation or preventative measures.

This Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been prepared in accordance with the European Commission's Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological Guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2001) and Managing Natura 2000 Sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2018) as well as the Department of the Environment's Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG, 2010).

In addition to the guidelines referenced above, the following relevant documents were also considered in the preparation of this report:

1. *Council of the European Commission (1992) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. Official Journal of the European Communities. Series L 20, pp. 7-49.*
2. *EC (2000) Managing Natura 2000 Sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.*
3. *EC (2007) Guidance document on Article 6(4) of the 'Habitats Directive' 92/43/EEC – Clarification of the concepts of: alternative solutions, imperative reasons of overriding public interest, compensatory measures, overall coherence. Opinion of the commission.*
4. *EC (2013) Interpretation Manual of European Union Habitats. Version EUR 28. European Commission.*

1.2 Appropriate Assessment

1.2.1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment

Screening is the process of determining whether an Appropriate Assessment is required for a plan or project. Under Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, screening must be carried out by the Competent Authority. As per Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended '*A screening for appropriate assessment shall be carried out by the competent authority to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if that Land use plan or proposed development, individually or in combination with another plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on the*

European site'. The Competent Authority's determination as to whether an Appropriate Assessment is required must be made on the basis of objective information and should be recorded. The Competent Authority may request information to be supplied to enable it to carry out screening.

Consultants or project proponents may provide for the competent authority, the information necessary for them to determine whether an Appropriate Assessment is required and provide advice to assist them in the Article 6(3) Appropriate Assessment Screening decision.

Where it cannot be excluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt at the Screening stage, that a proposed plan or project, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, would have a significant effect on the conservation objectives of a European site, an Appropriate Assessment is required.

Where an Appropriate Assessment is required, the Competent Authority may require the applicant to prepare a Natura Impact Statement.

The term Natura Impact Statement (NIS) is defined in legislation¹. An NIS, where required, should present the data, information and analysis necessary to reach a definitive determination as to 1) the implications of the plan or project, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, for a European site in view of its conservation objectives, and 2) whether there will be adverse effects on the integrity of a European site. The NIS should be underpinned by best scientific knowledge, objective information and by the precautionary principle.

This Article 6(3) Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been prepared in compliance with the provision of section 177U of the Planning & Development Act 2010 as amended.

Statement of Authority

Baseline ecological surveys were undertaken on the 14th of October 2019 by Claire Stephens (B.Sc., Qualifying CIEEM) and on 10th of May 2021 by Aran von der Geest Moroney (B.Sc.). MKO ecologists are trained in field ecology and are experts in undertaking surveys to this level. This report has been prepared by Aran von der Geest Moroney (B.Sc.) and reviewed by SarahMullen (B.Sc., MSc., Ph.D, ACIEEM). Sarah has five years' experience working in ecological consultancy.

¹ As defined in Section 177T of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended, an NIS means a statement, for the purposes of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, of the implications of a proposed development, on its own and in combination with other plans and projects, for a European site in view of its conservation objectives. It is required to include a report of a scientific examination of evidence and data, carried out by competent persons to identify and classify any implications for the European site in view of its conservation objectives

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Site Location

The proposed development site, measuring 1.5 ha, is located in the townland of Gortboy, Newcastle West, Co. Limerick. The site is located approximately 1.1km to the north of Newcastle West town centre and approximately 36km south-west of Limerick City, Co. Limerick (Grid reference: E 128551 N 134594). The site is bordered to the north by Desmond Business Park, by other existing residential developments to the south and west and agricultural fields/wet grassland to the east. Stack's to Mullaghareirk Mountains, West Limerick Hills and Mount Eagle SPA (004161) is located approximately 4.7km to the west of the proposed development and is the closest European Designated Site to the proposal. The site is accessed from the south via Station Road off the N21 Limerick Road. The site location is shown in Figure 2.1.

2.2 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

2.2.1 Description of the project

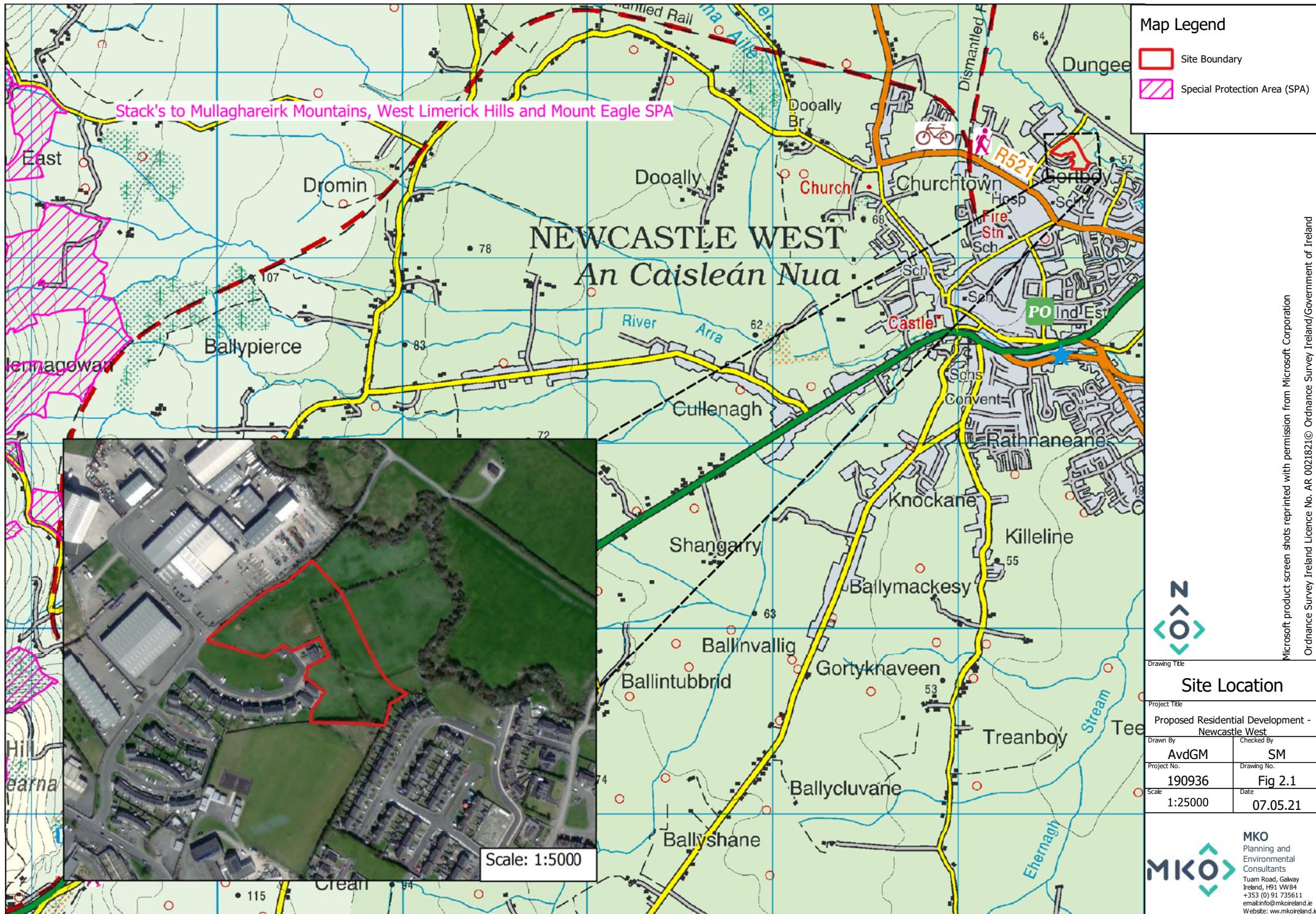
The proposed development site is 1.5ha in size. The proposed development will consist of the provision of 31 no. residential units as follows:

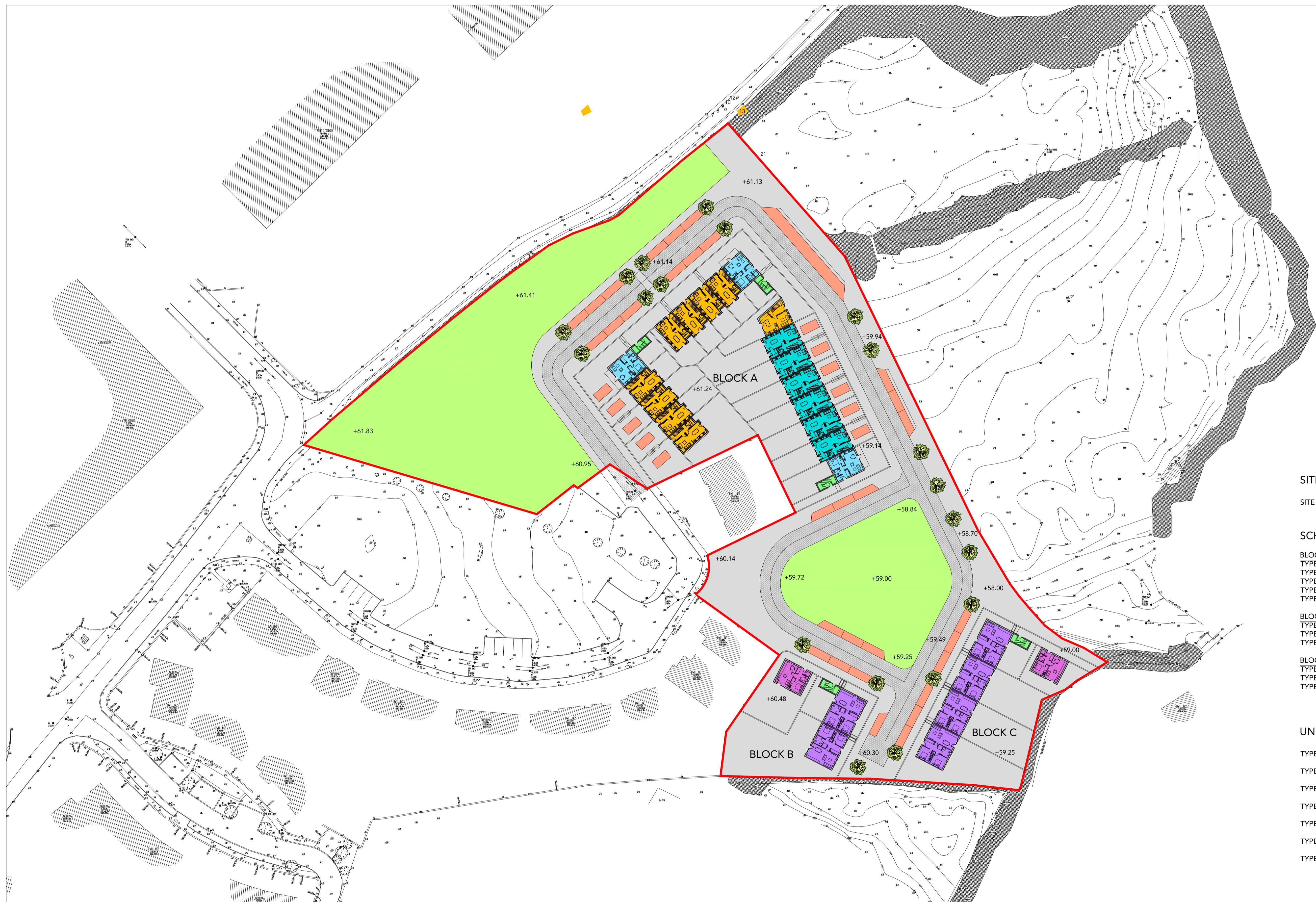
- Block A
 - 6 no. 3-bed 5 person house (112.4sqm)
 - 8 no. 2-bed 4 person house (87.7 sqm)
 - 3 no. 1-bed 2 person apartment (47.2 sqm)
 - 3 no. 1-bed 2 person apartment (65.8 sqm)
 - 1 no. 2-bed 4 person house (87.4 sqm)
- Block B
 - 1 no. 1-bed 2 person apartment (65.8 sqm)
 - 2 no. 2-bed 4 person house (75.4 sqm)
 - 1 no. 1-bed 2 person house (47.2 sqm)
- Block C
 - 1 no. 1-bed 2 person apartment (65.8 sqm)
 - 4 no. 2-bed 4 person house (75.4 sqm)
 - 1 no. 1-bed 2 person house (47.2 sqm)

The development will consist of two Phases. Block A will be delivered in Phase 1 and Block B will be delivered in Phase 2.

Foul water from the proposed development will connect to the existing foul water network servicing the adjacent Sycamore Crescent to the west of the site. A pre-connection enquiry was lodged with Irish Water in relation to the proposed development. Irish Water confirmed that there is capacity to accept the proposed connection to the network. The letter of confirmation from Irish Water is included in Appendix 1.

Surface water run-off from all of the development's hard surfaces including roads and roofs, will connect to the existing public surface water drainage network servicing the adjacent Sycamore Crescent. On-site storage (attenuation tanks) and discharge to ground via filtration pits/swales will also be incorporated to minimise outflow from the site. All surface water will pass through a petrol interceptor prior to entering the attenuation tank and will be discharged at a controlled rate via a hydrobrake device. Permeable surface finishes will be used where possible to minimise runoff





SITE INFO:

SITE AREA: 1.5 ha

SCHEDULE OF UNITS:

BLOCK A	TYPE A	3 BED	112.4 sqm	6 no.
	TYPE B	2 BED	87.7 sqm	8 no.
	TYPE C	1 BED	47.2 sqm	3 no.
	TYPE D	1 BED	65.8 sqm	3 no.
	TYPE E	2 BED	87.4 sqm	1 no.
BLOCK B	TYPE F	1 BED	75.4 sqm	2 no.
BLOCK C	TYPE G	1 BED	47.2 sqm	1 no.
		TOTAL		31 no.

UNIT TYPES LEGEND:

TYPE A	3 BED, 5 PERSON HOUSE	112.4 sqm
TYPE B	2 BED, 4 PERSON HOUSE	87.7 sqm
TYPE C	1 BED, 2 PERSON APT	47.2 sqm
TYPE D	1 BED, 2 PERSON APT	65.8 sqm
TYPE E	2 BED, 4 PERSON HOUSE	87.4 sqm
TYPE F	2 BED, 4 PERSON HOUSE	75.4 sqm
TYPE G	1 BED, 2 PERSON HOUSE	47.2 sqm

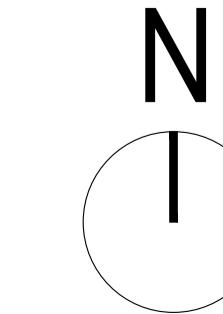
Figure 2.2 Site Layout

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DO NOT SCALE from this drawing.
Use figured dimensions. Contractor to check all dimensions on site prior to commencement of works. Any discrepancies are to be referred to the ARCHITECT.

SCALE @ 1:500 on A1

0m 10m 20m 30m 40m 50m 60m 70m 80m 90m 100m



MATERIALS LEGEND:

	5.5m WIDE NEW ROAD
	GREEN/PARK/LANDSCAPED AREA
	PARKING SPACES
	FOOTPATH/PAVING/HARD LANDSCAPING

REVISIONS

Limerick City & County Council			
Design & Delivery Services Merchants Quay Limerick			
DATE:	APR 2021	SCALE:	1:500 @ A1
DRAWN:	BR	CHECKED:	-
DATE	REV.	BY	CH. DESCRIPTION
			JOB No: 19119-002
			SHEET SIZE
			A1
			REVISION

volumes. In addition to the above, 2 no. filter drains will also be installed within the site. One will be installed along the northern boundary of the site which will collect surface water from the field to the north of the site boundary. This will not include water from the development's hard surfaces. The second filter drain runs through the centre of the site and will connect to the public surface water network.

The site layout is shown in Figure 2.2.

2.2.2

Description of the Baseline Ecological Environment

Assessing the impacts of any project and associated activities requires an understanding of the ecological baseline conditions prior to and at the time of the project proceeding. Ecological Baseline conditions are those existing in the absence of proposed activities (CIEEM 2018, updated 2021).

A multidisciplinary walkover survey was conducted on the 14th of October 2019 in line with NRA (2009) guidelines (Ecological Surveying Techniques for Protected Flora and Fauna during the Planning of National Road Schemes) by Claire Stephens (B. Sc. Env., Qualifying CIEEM) of MKO. The site was revisited by Aran von der Geest Moroney of MKO on the 10th of May 2021, in line with NRA (2009) guidelines (Ecological Surveying Techniques for Protected Flora and Fauna during the Planning of National Road Schemes), to assess changes to the proposed site boundary and site layout that had taken place since the walkover survey undertaken in 2019. The ecological survey undertaken in May 2021 was undertaken during the optimal time of year to undertake a habitat and flora survey (Smith *et al.*, 2011). All habitats within and adjacent to the works areas were readily identifiable during the site visits. A dedicated invasive species survey was also undertaken during the site visits. During the survey, the site was searched for species listed on the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations (S.I. 477 of 2011).

The site is categorised predominantly as **Improved agricultural grassland (GA1)/Wet Grassland (GS4)** (Plate 2.1). Species recorded within this grassland area included yellow iris (*Iris pseudacorus*), hedge mustard (*Sisymbrium officinale*), meadow foxtail (*Alopecurus pratensis*), cocksfoot (*Dactylis glomerata*), perennial rye grass (*Lolium perenne*), crested dogs tail (*Cynosurus cristatus*) cuckoo flower (*Cardamine pratensis*), greater plantain (*Plantago major*), curled dock (*Rumex crispus*), broad leaved dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), meadow buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*), dandelion (*Taraxacum vulgaria*), common nettle (*Urtica dioica*), springy turf-moss (*Rhytidiodelphus squarrosus*) and soft rush (*Juncus effusus*). The site boundary bordering the adjacent Sycamore Crescent residential development located to the west and south of the site is delineated by a timber fence and the existing walls of that development. These features are classified as **Buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3)**.

A combination of **hedgerow (WL1)** and **treeline (WL2)** dominated by hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*), willow (*Salix* spp.), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), apple trees (*Malus domestica*), bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) and ivy (*Hedera helix*) bisects the site from north to south and is also present along the site's northern and southern boundaries (Plate 2.2).

A number of vegetated **Drainage ditches [FW4]** are present within the site, including along sections of the north-western boundary of the site, along the hedgerow that bisects the site from north to south and also at the south east of the site running from west to east (Plate 2.3).

Small areas to the north and north-west of the site, dominated by bramble, blackthorn and common nettle (*Urtica dioica*), were categorised as **Scrub (WS1)**.

There are no watercourses within the proposed development site, however the Daar river is located approximately 52m to the east of the proposed development. The river is classified as an **Eroding/upland river [FW1]**.

No Annex I listed habitats or supporting habitat for Annex II plant species were identified within or adjacent to the proposed development site.

No invasive species listed under Regulations 49 and 50 of the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011) were recorded within the development site boundary.

The non-native invasive species, Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*), was identified outside of the development site boundary along the bank of Daar River. This species is listed on the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011.



Plate 2.1 Improved agricultural grassland (GA1)/Wet Grassland (GS4) and Hedgerows (WL1)/ Treelines (WL2) at the north of the site.



Plate 2.2 A Drainage ditch [FW4], and Hedgerow [WL1] runs along the north-western boundary with scrub [WS1] dominated by bramble (*Rubus fruticosus agg.*) in the foreground.



Plate 2.3 Dry Ditch to the south-east of the development site

2.2.3 Significance of Habitats

Ecological evaluation follows a methodology that is set out in Chapter 3 of the ‘Guidelines for Assessment of Ecological Impacts of National Roads Schemes’ (NRA, 2009). The habitats within and adjacent to the works site were evaluated in accordance with the criteria developed by the NRA (2009b), which classifies sites in terms of their ecological importance, i.e. ‘*international importance*’, ‘*national importance*’, ‘*county importance*’, ‘*local importance (higher value)*’ or ‘*local importance (lower value)*’.

None of the habitats within the development site correspond to habitats listed on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive. No supporting habitat for any Qualifying Interest species associated with any European sites were recorded within the proposed development site. The buildings and artificial surfaces, scrub, grassland habitats and drainage ditches were assigned ***Local Importance (Lower Value)***.

The hedgerows and treelines within the site boundary have been classified as ***Local Importance (Higher Value)*** as they are essential in maintaining connectivity and ecological corridors between features of higher ecological value in the surrounding environment. They provide ‘low’ suitability for bat roosting due to the lack of suitable cracks and cavities in the trees.

The Daar river located to the east of the development site boundary has been classified as ***Local Importance (Higher Value)*** as it is a semi-natural habitat presenting a high degree of naturalness and biodiversity which also supports a suitable habitat for Otter. It also helps maintain links and ecological corridors between features of higher ecological value. The river lies entirely outside of the development site boundary and will not be disturbed by the proposed works.

2.2.4 Fauna

An assemblage of common bird species including Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*), Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*), Jackdaw (*Corvus monedula*), Hooded Crow (*Corvus cornix*) and Wood pigeon (*Columba palumbus*) were recorded during the site visit. No protected fauna were recorded within the proposed works site on the day of the site visit.

The Daar river, located >50m to the east of the development has potential to support otter. A comprehensive search for otter (*Lutra lutra*) was undertaken of the Daar River otter in line with NRA guidelines. No evidence of otter including spraints, holts, prints, resting sites or slides were recorded (NRA, 2008 and Reid, *et al* 2013), however, the river provides suitable foraging and commuting habitat for this species. No evidence of otter including spraint, holts, prints, resting sites or slides were recorded within the site boundary during the site visit and the development site does not provide potential resting or breeding habitat for this species.

No supporting habitat for any SCI species associated with any nearby SPAs was recorded within the proposed development site.

2.2.5 Significance of Fauna

No QI or SCI species associated with any European site were recorded within or adjacent to the proposed development site boundary.

3. IDENTIFICATION OF RELEVANT EUROPEAN SITES

3.1 Identification of the European Sites within the Likely Zone of Impact

The following methodology was used to establish which European Sites are within the Likely Zone of Impact of the proposed development:

- Initially the most up to date GIS spatial datasets for European designated sites and water catchments were downloaded from the NPWS website (www.npws.ie) and the EPA website (www.epa.ie) on the 01/06/2021. The datasets were utilized to identify European Sites which could feasibly be affected by the proposed development.
- All European Sites within a distance of 15km surrounding the development site were identified and are shown on Figure 3.1. In addition, the potential for connectivity with European Sites at distances of greater than 15km from the proposed development was also considered in this initial assessment. In this case, no potential connectivity with sites located at a distance of over 15km from the proposed development was identified.
- The catchment mapping was used to establish or discount potential hydrological connectivity between the site of the proposed development and any European Sites. The hydrological catchments are also shown in Figure 3.1.
- In relation to Special Protection Areas, in the absence of any specific European or Irish guidance in relation to such sites, the Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) Guidance, ‘Assessing Connectivity with Special Protection Areas (SPA)’ (2016) was consulted. This document provides guidance in relation to the identification of connectivity between proposed development and Special Protection Areas. The guidance takes into consideration the distances species may travel beyond the boundary of their SPAs and provides information on dispersal and foraging ranges of bird species which are frequently encountered when considering plans and projects.
- Table 3.1 provides details of all relevant European Sites as identified in the preceding steps and assesses which are within the likely Zone of Impact. The assessment considers any likely direct or indirect impacts of the proposed development, both alone and in combination with other plans and projects, on European Sites by virtue of the following criteria: size and scale, land-take, distance from the European Site or key features of the site, resource requirements, emissions, excavation requirements, transportation requirements and duration of construction, operation and decommissioning were considered in this screening assessment
- The site synopses and conservation objectives of these sites, as per the NPWS website (www.npws.ie), were consulted and reviewed at the time of preparing this report 01/06/2021. Figure 3.1 shows the location of the proposed development in relation to all European sites within 15km of the proposed development.
- Where potential pathways for Significant Effect are identified, the site is included within the Likely Zone of Impact and further assessment is required.

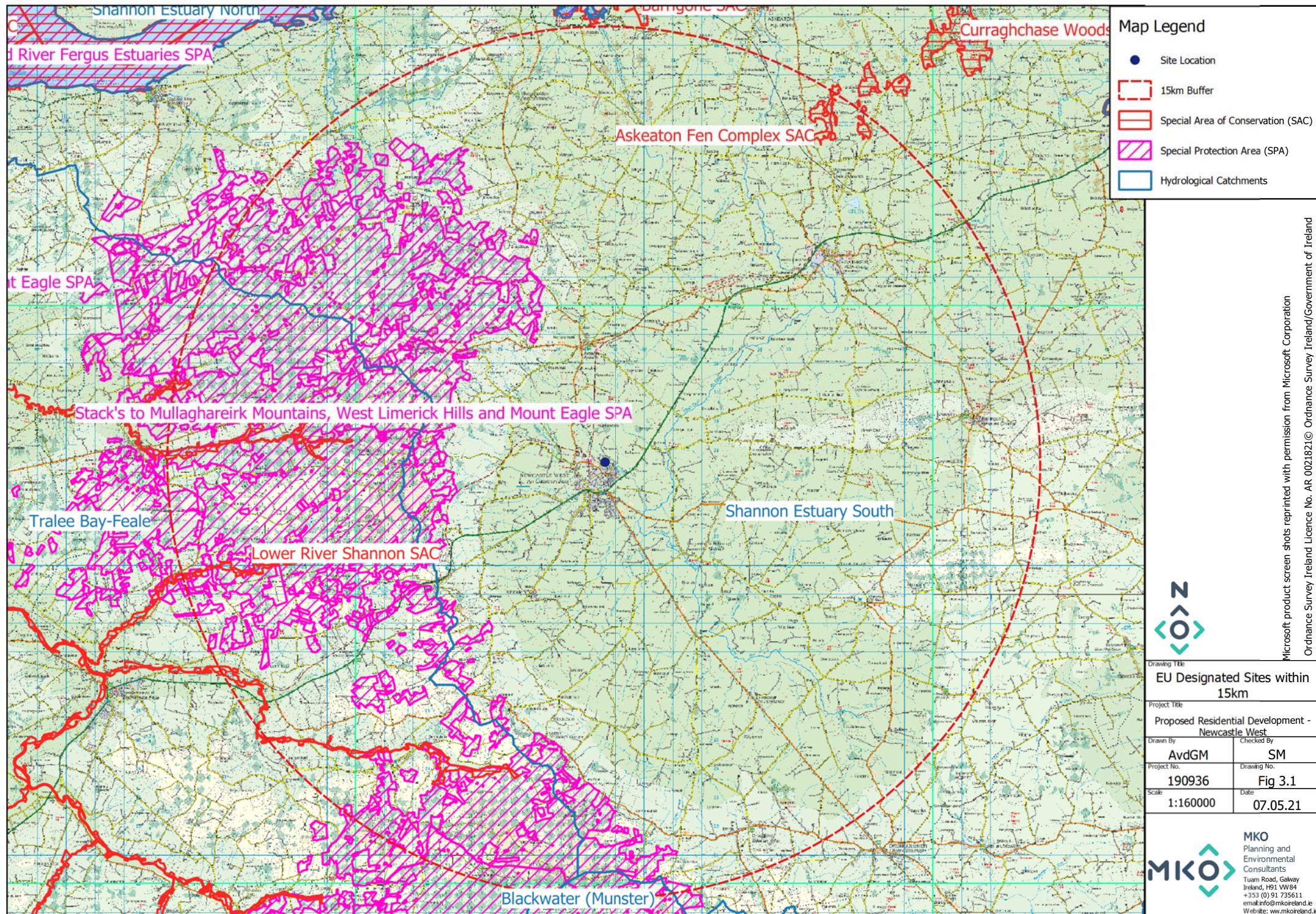


Table 3.1 Identification of Designated sites within the Likely Zone of Impact

European Sites and distance from proposed development	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, www.npws.ie on the 01/06/2021)	Conservation Objectives	Likely Zone of Impact Determination
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)			
Lower River Shannon SAC [002165] Distance: 8.6km	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Freshwater Pearl Mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>) [1029] ➢ Sea Lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>) [1095] ➢ Brook Lamprey (<i>Lampetra planeri</i>) [1096] ➢ River Lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>) [1099] ➢ Atlantic Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) (only in fresh water) [1106] ➢ Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time [1110] ➢ Estuaries [1130] ➢ Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] ➢ Coastal lagoons [1150] ➢ Large shallow inlets and bays [1160] ➢ Reefs [1170] ➢ Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] ➢ Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] 	Detailed conservation objectives for this site (Version 1, August 2012) were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at www.npws.ie	<p>There will be no direct effects as the project footprint is located entirely outside the designated site.</p> <p>The Daar river is located over 50m from the proposed development and buffered from the development by agricultural grassland and riparian treeline. The river has connectivity with The Lower River Shannon SAC > 30km downstream. Given the intervening distance between the development and the SAC and the diluting capacity of the intervening watercourse, as well as the nature and scale of the works, and the buffer between the works site and the Daar river, there is no potential for significant indirect effects on the.</p> <p>No QI habitats or supporting habitat for QI species was identified within the proposed development site. No habitat</p>

European Sites and distance from proposed development	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, www.npws.ie on the 01/06/2021)	Conservation Objectives	Likely Zone of Impact Determination
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonizing mud and sand [1310] ➢ Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330] ➢ Bottlenose Dolphin (<i>Tursiops truncates</i>) [1349] ➢ Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355] ➢ Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410] ➢ Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260] ➢ <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410] ➢ Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0] 		<p>loss or disturbance related effects on QI species are anticipated.</p> <p>No pathway for effect was identified and the site is not within the Likely Zone of Impact.</p>
Askeaton Fen Complex SAC [002279] Distance: 13.1km	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i> [7210] ➢ Alkaline fens [7230] 	Detailed conservation objectives for this site (Version 1, May 2018) were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at www.npws.ie	<p>There will be no direct effects as the project footprint is located entirely outside the designated site.</p> <p>This European site is separated from the site of proposed development located</p>

European Sites and distance from proposed development	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, www.npws.ie on the 01/06/2021)	Conservation Objectives	Likely Zone of Impact Determination
			<p>13.1km from the proposed development and there is no hydrological connectivity between the development and the SAC located in a separate hydrological sub-catchment. Given the absence of connectivity and the distance from the SAC, no pathways for indirect effects on the SAC were identified.</p> <p>No pathway for effect was identified and the site is not within the Likely Zone of Impact.</p>
Special Protection Area (SPA)			
<p>Stack's to Mullaghareirk Mountains, West Limerick Hills and Mount Eagle SPA (004161)</p> <p>Distance: 4.7km</p>	<p>➤ Hen Harrier (<i>Circus cyaneus</i>) [A082]</p>	<p>This site has the generic conservation objective:</p> <p><i>'To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA.'</i> (NPWS Generic version 8.0, 2021)</p>	<p>There will be no direct effects as the works are located entirely outside of this European Site.</p> <p>This European Site is located 4.7km from the development. The proposed development site consists predominantly of agricultural grassland and does not provide suitable supporting habitat for hen harrier. No habitat loss or disturbance related effects on SCI species Hen Harrier (<i>Circus cyaneus</i>)</p>

European Sites and distance from proposed development	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, www.npws.ie on the 01/06/2021)	Conservation Objectives	Likely Zone of Impact Determination
			<p>[A082] are anticipated. The site is outside the core foraging range for SCI species hen harrier (SNH Guidance V3, 2016).</p> <p>No pathway for effect was identified and the site is not within the Likely Zone of Impact.</p>

3.2

European Sites with the Potential to be Significantly Affected by the Proposed Development

It is anticipated that no European Sites will be affected by the proposed development.

3.3

Likely Cumulative Impact of the Proposed Works on European Sites, in-combination with other plans and projects

The potential for the proposed development to contribute to a cumulative impact on European Sites was considered. The online planning system for Limerick City and County Council was consulted on the 07/05/2021.

Additional projects identified in the vicinity of the development, in the townland of Gortboy, Newcastle West include permission to;

- Outline permission for the construction of a two-story dwelling house with garage and all associated site works and Planning Permission for the conversion of language school building to dwelling house with garage (Planning ref: 1654).
- Permission for an internal refurbishment works to the eastern corner of the ground floor of existing workhouse building. The works to the interior will consist of the removal of a number of walls/partitions and internal alterations to the existing structure to refurbish an area of approximately 134 square metres providing 2 new ensuite palliative care rooms and associated ancillary rooms (this development is within a protected structure no. 1446) (Planning ref.: 16498),
- Retention for the (1) construction of single storey entrance porch (2) change of use of first floor from domestic to commercial use (3) the provision of additional car parking and all ancillary site works (Planning ref.: 16757),
- Permission for a change of use of first floor area from office space to a physio therapy room and a pilates & fitness studio and all associated works (Planning ref.: 16952),
- Permission for the the construction of two storey dwelling house, drive, connection to all services and all ancillary site works (Planning ref.: 171176),
- Permission to extend the existing restaurant unit, this will involve the removal of 2 no. upvc later edition windows, and the insertion of double glazed doors in their place as well as the completed removal of the later edition Box window facing south west, the provision of a new single storey extension on the external paved area, a change in position of the delivery door to the kitchen to the south-east elevation, limited new signage in keeping with the existing signage and all associated site works on and underground. The Carnegie Centre is a protected structure, RPS 1458 (Planning ref.: 17336),
- Permission altering building layout, elevations and roof, install a new carpark and canopy to cover proposed wheelchair accessible spaces, and connect to existing storm sewer for new car park area (Planning ref.: 18122),
- Permission for (A) construction of portal frame type building to contain a truck maintenance area and commercial vehicle testing area with associated offices and ancillary areas. (B) Installation of a truck wash. (C) Connection of existing foul

- and storm sewer network with connection to all utility services with all associated site works (Planning ref: 18155),
- Permission for the change of use of part of the existing dwelling house to commercial use to be utilised for personal training sessions (Planning ref.: 181291),
 - Permission for removing existing substandard prefabricated building and construct new purpose built pre-school/after school facility with associated ancillary spaces and link connections to existing services with all associated site works (Planning ref.: 18213),
 - Permission for the demolition of existing disused manufacturing building, offices and weigh bridge office and all associated site works (Planning ref.: 18373),
 - Extension of Permission for Planning File Ref. No. 12/907: (1) primary care centre over 4 levels incorporating 3 no. General Practitioner's Clinics, 1 no. retail unit and Health Services Executive accommodation, (2) the refurbishment and re-orientation of existing car park to Garveys Supermarket along with changes in gradients and levels to improve access and use, (3) associated ancillary site works including the following- (i) demolition of existing boundary wall, (ii) construction of a new sub-station, (iii) construction of a refuse storage area, (iv) car parking at ground and lower ground level to serve the development and (v) pedestrian access ramp (Planning ref.: 187028),
 - Permission for the renovation & extension to ground floor pre-school. Also for first floor conversion to bedrooms within the increased height roof area to be completed in two stages. Stage one extension & renovation of pre-school with roof extension over extended pre-school (Planning ref.: 1878),
 - Permission for the (a) change of use of existing building to a commercial vehicle testing centre, (b) the construction of a rear and side extension to same, (c) existing connection to all public utility services with all associated sites works (Planning ref.: 1882),
 - Permission for the construction of six semi-detached dwelling houses and associated site works (Floor area: 642.48 sqm) (Planning ref: 18994),
 - Permission for 1 no. temporary modular building for use as a music classroom and carry out all associated site works (Planning ref.: 19285),
 - Permission for the construction of a new three storey Primary Care Centre medical facility comprising GP Clinic, Pharmacy, Café, Tusla and HSE medical facilities at ground floor level and HSE Primary Care medical facilities, including diagnostics, at first and second floor levels and all associated ancillary accommodation including Cold Water Storage plantroom, Lift Overrun, louvred screened plant area & PV panels at roof level, and site works comprising, landscaped garden area to Station Road, 120 no. car parking spaces segregated into staff and visitor parking, staff and visitor covered bicycle parking, street lighting, boundary fencing and signage (Planning ref.: 19395),
 - Permission for construction of a single storey extension to the existing Jasmine ward in St. Ita's Hospital, a Protected Structure (RPS 1446 also recorded on the National inventory of Architectural Heritage Ref. No. 21837019) including bedrooms, family room, kitchen, dining room and roof plant area, all with associated site works , gas store and car parking (Planning ref: 19665),
 - Retention for a change of use from the original warehouse use to a retail shop including permission for an off licence (Planning ref: 20601),
 - Permission for change of opening hours to 9am to 6pm, Monday to Friday. Also for retention permission of a covered play area to the side of existing Montessori School building and toy storage building (2 sqm) (Planning ref: 201131).

The Limerick County Development Plan 2010 - 2016 was also reviewed and considered as part of this assessment.

No pathway or mechanism for the proposed development to result in any significant effect on any European Site was identified when considered on its own during the assessment process and therefore there is no potential for it to contribute to any such effects when considered in-combination with other developments.

Describe how the project is likely to affect the European Site

- There will be no direct effect on the QIs or SCIs of any European sites and no pathways for significant indirect effects were identified.
- The project as proposed will not significantly affect any European Sites.

4. ARTICLE 6(3) APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING STATEMENT AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this Screening Assessment are presented following the European Commission's Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological Guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2001) and Managing Natura 2000 Sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2018) as well as the Department of the Environment's Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG, 2010).

4.1 Data Collected to Carry Out Assessment

In preparation of the report, the following sources were used to gather information:

- Review of NPWS Site Synopses, Conservation Objectives for the European Sites
- Review of 2019, 2013 and 2007 EU Habitats Directive (Article 17) Reports.
- Review of online web-mappers: National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), EPA
- Review of OS maps and aerial photographs of the site of the proposed project.
- Review of other plans and projects within the area.
- Site visits conducted by Claire Stephens (B.Sc., Qualifying CIEEM) on the 14th of October 2019 and Aran von der Geest Moroney (B.Sc.) on the 10th of May 2021.

4.2 Concluding Statement

It is concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt, in view of best scientific knowledge, on the basis of objective information and in light of the conservation objectives of the relevant European sites, that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on any European Site.

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APPENDIX 1

LETTER FROM IRISH WATER

Cian Lynch
Limerick City and County Council
Merchants Quay
Co.Limerick
V94EH90
Ireland

Uisce Éireann
Bosca OP 448
Oifig Sheachadta na
Cathrach Theas
Cathair Chorcal

24 October 2019

Irish Water
PO Box 448,
South City
Delivery Office,
Cork City.
www.water.ie

Dear Cian Lynch,

**Re: Connection Reference No CDS19006732 pre-connection enquiry -
Subject to contract | Contract denied**

**Connection for Housing Development of 20 unit(s) at Sycamore Cresent,, Newcastle West,
Limerick.**

Irish Water has reviewed your pre-connection enquiry in relation to a Water & Wastewater connection at Sycamore Cresent,, Newcastle West, Limerick.

Based upon the details that you have provided with your pre-connection enquiry and on the capacity currently available in the network(s), as assessed by Irish Water, we wish to advise you that, subject to a valid connection agreement being put in place, your proposed connection to the Irish Water network(s) can be facilitated.

Wastewater:

In order to complete the proposed connection at the Premises, the Irish Water wastewater network will have to be extended by approximately 25m. Irish Water currently does not have any plans to extend its network in this area. Should you wish to consider extending the waste water infrastructure to a point to connect to the Irish Water network, please contact Irish Water.

No storm water shall discharge to the public foul network.

Drinking Water:

This Confirmation of Feasibility to connect to the Irish Water infrastructure also does not extend to your fire flow requirements. In order to determine the potential flow that could be delivered during normal operational conditions, an on site assessment of the existing network is required. Please note that Irish Water cannot guarantee a flow rate to meet fire flow requirements and in order to guarantee a flow to meet the Fire Authority requirements, you should provide adequate fire storage capacity within your development.

All infrastructure should be designed and installed in accordance with the Irish Water Codes of Practice and Standard Details. A design proposal for the water and/or wastewater infrastructure should be submitted to Irish Water for assessment. Prior to submitting your planning application, you are required to submit these detailed design proposals to Irish Water for review.

You are advised that this correspondence does not constitute an offer in whole or in part to provide a connection to any Irish Water infrastructure and is provided subject to a connection agreement being signed at a later date.

A connection agreement can be applied for by completing the connection application form available at www.water.ie/connections. Irish Water's current charges for water and wastewater connections are set out in the Water Charges Plan as approved by the Commission for Regulation of Utilities.

If you have any further questions, please contact John Hennessy from the design team on 022 52256 or email jhennessy@water.ie. For further information, visit www.water.ie/connections.

Yours sincerely,



Maria O'Dwyer

Connections and Developer Services