Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

in accordance with Article 2 of the EIA Directive, as amended, and transposing national legislation

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for proposed

social housing development

at

Harbour Road, Mullingar

by

CAAS Ltd

for

Westmeath County Council

WESTMEATH COUNTY COUNCIL
Comhairle Chontae na h-Iarmhí

08 September 2025

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Document Control

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[1] Competency details are given in Appendix IV

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1 Introduction

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a procedure carried out in accordance with the requirements of the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU as amended. The Directive aims to ensure a high level of protection for the environment. At Article 2 it requires that an assessment of the likely significant effects a project will have on the environment is carried out, where relevant, before development consent is given. In order to ensure compliance with the Directive, the first step is to consider whether a consent process needs to be subject to EIA, and whether an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) needs to be prepared to support the process.

CAAS Ltd. has been appointed by Westmeath County Council to prepare this EIA screening report for a proposed social housing development at Harbour Road, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath. This report provides an independent professional opinion as to whether the proposed development should be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and whether an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) should be prepared for it. It is provided in support of the Council in the performance of their function in determining whether the proposed development is required to be subject to EIA.

The screening assesses the proposed development with reference to the EIA legislation including the EIA Directive, and Planning and Development and Roads legislation[2]. It also has regard to relevant parts of:

- *EIA Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding sub-threshold development*, 2003, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government
- *Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment*, 2018, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government
- *OPR Practice Note PN02 Environmental Impact Assessment Screening*, 2021, Office of the Planning Regulator
- *Guidance for EIA and AA screening of active travel projects funded by the NTA*, 2023, NTA
- relevant EU Guidance including *Interpretation of definitions of project categories of annex I and II of the EIA Directive*, 2024, EU and *Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects - Guidance on Screening*, 2017, EU.

The first screening step involves a review of the characteristics of the proposed development to find out if it corresponds to any category which is subject to the EIA requirements as set out in the legislation. If it does so and does not equal or exceed a specified threshold then the second step is to carry out a 'preliminary examination' to establish the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development. The outcome of the preliminary examination (if required) determines the subsequent steps of the screening process which may involve sub-threshold project considerations and review against prescribed criteria for determining whether the proposed development should be subject to EIA.

[2] see section 3

The report is structured as follows -

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An overview of the authors' competency is provided in Appendix IV.

2 The proposed development

The proposed development comprises 50 residential units per the below breakdown and associated site development works including internal roads, paths, paving, parking, drainage, landscaped public open space, street lighting and boundary treatments. A foul sewer and separate storm sewer will be provided and connect to existing drainage infrastructure.

It will link Harbour Road to the north of the site with Lady Aberdeen Cottages to the South using a through road.

The site, shown in Figures 1 and 2, is approximately 1.56 ha in area.

A breakdown of the proposed residential unit types is provided in this table -

Proposed House Types	Bedrooms	Bed spaces per unit	Target Area
4 Bed x 5 (House Block 1)	4	7	128sqm
3 Bed x 8 (House Block 3)	3	5	103sqm
2 Bed x 8 (House Block 3)	2	4	87sqm
2 Bed x 15 (House Block 2)	2	4	85sqm
2 Bed x 1 (House Block 2 – End facing)	2	4	84sqm
2 Bed x 1 (House Block 4)	2	3	67sqm
1 Bed x 2 (House Block 5)	1	2	51sqm
1 Bed x 10 (Apartment Block)	1	2	53sqm

Figure 1 Location of the proposed development site [3]

[3] Source: Google maps (site boundary is approximate)

Figure 2 Proposed site plan[4]

4 Source: Westmeath County Council (see accompanying drawing set for full resolution versions of all drawings)

3 Legislative basis for EIA

EIA requirements derive from EU Directive 2011/92/EU (as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU) on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment. The Directive has been transposed into various Irish legislation of which the following is the most relevant to this development.

- Planning and Development Acts 2000-2020 (Part X)
- Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (S.I. 600/2001) as amended
- European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 (S.I. 296/2018)
- Roads Act 1993 as amended

4 Project category

In the first instance it is necessary to determine whether the proposed development corresponds to any project category that is subject to EIA requirements.

The project categories are set out in Annexes I and II of the Directive. Projects falling into Annex I categories automatically require EIA. Projects falling into Annex II categories require EIA if they meet or exceed a given threshold.

For purposes of Section 176 of the Planning and Development Act, Annex I categories are transposed into Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations and Annex II categories are transposed into Part 2 of the same Schedule.

Road project categories are generally transposed into the Roads Act 2003.

All potentially relevant categories are listed in the table below, with commentaries on their applicability to the proposed development.

Because the given categories are subject to interpretation, this review takes account of relevant case law and guidance in order to assess whether the proposed development falls into any of them.

Project category / threshold	Comment	Does development correspond to category?	Is EIA required on this basis?	Is Annex III screening required on this basis? [5]
EIA Directive (2011/92/EU) as amended				
Annex I				
7(c) *Construction of a new road of four or more lanes, or realignment and/or widening of an existing road of two lanes or less so as to provide four or more lanes, where such new road or realigned and/or widened section of road would be 10 km or more in a continuous length.*	The proposed development does not correspond to this category because the road elements do not provide for four or more lanes. The road elements are catered for by category 10(e) of Annex II. (see below)	No	No	No
Annex II				
10 Infrastructure projects				
(b) *Urban development projects, including the construction of shopping centres and car parks*	This category has been transposed into category 10(b) of Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, which is addressed under the Planning and Development Regulations heading below.	Yes	see below	see below
(e) *Construction of roads, harbours and port installations, including fishing harbours (projects not included in Annex I)*	This category has been transposed into S50(1) of the Roads Act 1993 and category 10(dd) of Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, which are addressed under the Roads Act and Planning and Development Regulations headings below.	Yes	see below	see below
Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (S.I. 600/2001) as amended				
Schedule 5, Part 2				
10. *Infrastructure* projects				
(b)(i) *Construction of more than 500 dwelling units.*	The proposed development includes residential units. It therefore corresponds to this project type. However, at 50 units it is well below the scale threshold.	Yes	No	Yes

Project category / threshold	Comment	Does development correspond to category?	Is EIA required on this basis?	Is Annex III screening required on this basis? [5]
(b)(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.*	Because the proposed car parking is incidental to the primary purpose of the development, this category can be taken as not applicable.	No	No	No
(b)(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 is catered for by categories other than 10(b)(iv), viz 10(b)(i) (above) and the Roads Act (below). The Commission guidance gives a range of examples of project types, such as such as sports stadiums and cultural centres, that can be considered to fall into the category of urban development. The proposed development does not correspond to or have similar characteristics to any of the given examples. On these bases ,and taking account of relevant case law[6,7], this category can reasonably be discounted.	No	No	No

[5] Sections 5 to 6 of this report cover this in detail

[6] including *Flynn & Carvill v Dublin City Council* [2025] IEHC 84, *Lyon v Cambridge City Council* [2012] EWHC 2684 and *R (Pickford) v Charnwood Borough Council* [2013] EWHC 2279

[7] *Ryan -v- An Bord Pleanála & Ors* [2025] IEHC 111 concerned the applicability of project category 10(b)(iv) to an industrial development. The court noted that whilst Annex II, Category 10 is headed "Infrastructure" this does not circumscribe the definitions of the project classes in it .The Court considered that industry is generally catered for by Annex classes other than Class 10(b) and that the Commission's 2024 Guidance lists many examples of urban development, and while some listed examples are infrastructural – for example, water treatment plants – none are industrial. The Court concluded on balance that, where industrial development is to be subjected to EIA, Annexes I and II of EIA Directive identify it reasonably specifically or in a specifically industrial class. On that view, Class 10(b) Urban Development should not, at least in general, be considered to include industrial development. The same principle may be applied to other types of project covered by other Annex I and II categories. (adapted from https://www.philiplee.ie/recent-court-decisions-on-the-meaning-of-urban-development-and-road-construction-projects-and-the-eia-directive/#:~:text=Section%2050(1)(a,public%20road%20or%20the%20improvement)

Project category / threshold	Comment	Does development correspond to category?	Is EIA required on this basis?	Is Annex III screening required on this basis? [5]
(dd) *All private **roads** which would exceed 2000 metres in length*	The proposed road elements are not private roads and are catered for by the Roads Act (see below). This category can be taken as not applicable.	No	No	No
Roads Act 1993				
S50,1(a) of the Roads Act including S8 of S.I. 119/1994 sets out thresholds for large scale road construction projects	S50,1(a) represents the transposition of Annex I category 7(e) and partial transposition of Annex II category 10(e) into the Roads Act. The thresholds set out in S50,1(a) encompass motorways, busways, service areas, roads of four lanes or more, bridges and tunnels. The proposed development does not correspond to any of these types.	No	No	No
S50(1)(b) to (d) require that any road development or road improvement project which would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, including projects located on ecologically protected sites, shall be subject to EIA.	S50(1)(b) to (d) represent the partial transposition of Annex II category 10(e) into the Roads Act. The meaning of a road is not defined in the Directive or in the Commission guidance. The Roads Act does contain a definition (see footnote[8]). The road elements of the proposed development fall within this definition. Because no automatic EIA requirement applies pursuant to S50,1(a); S50(1)(b) to (d) can be taken to be applicable. This effectively requires the development proposal to undergo Annex III screening to determine if it is likely to have	Yes	No	Yes

[8] Definition of road from the Roads Act

a. any street, lane, footpath, square, court, alley or passage,

b. any bridge, viaduct, underpass, subway, tunnel, overpass, overbridge, flyover, carriageway (whether single or multiple and whether or not designated for a particular class of vehicle), pavement or footway,

c. any weighbridge or other facility for the weighing or inspection of vehicles, toll plaza or other facility for the collection of tolls, service area, emergency telephone, first aid post, culvert, arch, gulley, railing, fence, wall, barrier, guardrail, margin, verge, kerb, lay-by, hard shoulder, island, pedestrian refuge, median, central reserve, channelliser, roundabout, gantry, pole, ramp, bollard, pipe, wire, cable, sign, signal or lighting forming part of the road, and

d. any other structure or thing forming part of the road and—

(i) *used, or the use of which is reasonably required, for the safety, convenience or amenity of road users or for the construction, maintenance, operation or management of the road or for the protection of the environment, or*

(ii) *prescribed by the Minister*

Project category / threshold	Comment	Does development correspond to category?	Is EIA required on this basis?	Is Annex III screening required on this basis?[5]
	significant effects on the environment and therefore be subject to EIA.			

The above review against the potentially relevant classes shows that the proposed development: corresponds to, but is well below the scale threshold of, project type 10(b)(i) as listed in Part 2 of Schedule 5; can be considered to also be subject to the EIA provisions of the Roads Act.

5 Sub-threshold development

Article 92 of the Regulations of 2001 as amended defines 'sub-threshold development' as:

> *development of a type set out in Part 2 of Schedule 5 which does not equal or exceed, as the case may be, a quantity, area or other limit specified in that Schedule in respect of the relevant class of development.*

Annex III of the EIA Directive (2011/92/EU as amended) as transposed into Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended - sets out criteria for review of sub-threshold projects to determine if they should be subject to EIA. These criteria include characteristics, location and potential impacts.

The proposed development falls into project type 10(b)(i) but is well below the prescribed 500-unit threshold. It is thus 'sub-threshold development'.

Because it falls within the scope of S50(1)(b) to (d) of the Roads Act, the proposed development requires screening using the criteria set out in Annex III. These are the same as the Schedule 7 criteria set out in the Planning and Development Regulations, as discussed above.

6 Preliminary examination

Article 120(1)(a) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended, requires that prior to screening a project for EIA: -

> *Where a local authority proposes to carry out a sub-threshold development, the authority shall carry out a preliminary examination of, at the least, the nature, size or location of the development.*

This is done to form a preliminary view on the likelihood of significant effects arising in order to determine if EIA is required, is not required or if screening against Schedule 7 criteria is required.

Because the proposed development is a sub-threshold development, a preliminary examination has been undertaken for it.

On preliminary examination it may be considered that there is significant and realistic doubt with regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development due, for example, to construction phase effects. Therefore, in accordance with Article 120(b)(ii) of the Regulations of 2001 as amended, a screening of the proposal against the criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the Regulations of 2001 (as amended) is provided in s7 of this report in order to form an opinion as to whether or not it should be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

7 Review against Schedule 7 criteria

These criteria, as listed in the table below, are grouped under the headings of:

1. Characteristics of the proposed development
2. Location of the proposed development
3. Types and characteristics of potential impacts

The comments provided in relation to the group 1 and 2 criteria are factual and do not cover the types or characteristics of potential impacts. In keeping with the intent of Schedule 7, commentary on impacts is provided in response to the items covered by group 3 (in the third part of the table below). All comments, particularly regarding 'significance', are made in the context of the Directive and guidance. The review against the Schedule 7 criteria takes account of the environmental factors set out in Schedule 6, paragraph 2(d) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended by the 2018 Regulations, as relevant. This review also covers the requirements of Annex III of the Directive as required on foot of S50(1)(b) to (d) of the Roads Act.

Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended by the 2018 Regulations, sets out '*Information to be provided by the Applicant or Developer for the Purposes of Screening Sub-threshold Development for Environmental Impact Assessment*', as follows:

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) description of the location of the proposed development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to the 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, on 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 waste, where relevant, and
   (b) the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity.
4. *The compilation of the information at paragraphs 1 to 3 shall take into account, where relevant, the criteria set out in Schedule 7.*

Regard is had in this report to the criteria set out in Schedule 7 for determining whether this sub-threshold development should be subject to EIA and to the information required by Schedule 7A for the purposes of screening sub-threshold development for EIA as set out in the commentary provided in and below the table which follows.

Schedule 7 Criteria	Commentary
1. Characteristics of Proposed Development The characteristics of proposed development, in particular:	
(a) the size and design of the whole of the proposed development	The project area is approx. 1.56 ha. The proposed project is a residential housing development as described in Section 2.
(b) cumulation with other existing development and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(*b*) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment	The surrounding lands are in various uses including residential, education, transportation (road) and agricultural use. Other existing developments are considered in this screening in the context of the location of the proposed development, as relevant. Appendix II contains a review of planning history in the vicinity of the proposed development which identifies other permitted developments that are taken account of for consideration of cumulative effects in this screening.
(c) the nature of any associated demolition works	The proposal does not include any demolition works.
(d) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity	The site is currently a greenfield site. The development will change much of this to hard surfaced areas. The proposed design incorporates permeable surfaces and other sustainable drainage measures and open spaces with greenway links.
(e) the production of waste	Waste generated during construction can be anticipated to be typical for a small to medium scale construction project. Operational waste can be anticipated to be typical for a development of this scale.
(f) pollution and nuisances	During construction, the proposal is likely to generate localised and short-term noise, dust and traffic.

(g) 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	There is no significant potential for the proposed development to give rise to significant adverse effects on the environment due to accidents and/or disasters. This applies to accidents/disasters arising from external factors as well as accidents arising from the development. Flood risk is not expected to affect this development site based off the current flood risk maps (floodmaps.ie) which show that there is no history of significant past flood events the area.
(h) the risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution)	The project characteristics pose no significant risks to human health.

2.Location of proposed development The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development, with particular regard to—	
(a) the existing and approved land use	The site is currently a greenfield site
(b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground	The site is currently a greenfield site
(c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:	
(i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths	The closest watercourse is Royal Canal (IE_SH_26R630830), at approx. 50 m from the proposed development site.
(ii) coastal zones and the marine environment	-
(iii) mountain and forest areas	-
(iv) nature reserves and parks	-
(v) areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive	The closest European site is Lough Ennell SACat approximately 5.54 km from the proposed development.

(vi) areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards laid down in legislation of the European Union and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure.	-
(vii) densely populated areas	The site is located within 500 m of Pearse St, the main street in Mullingar town centre.
(viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance	The site is located in the Royal Canal Corridor landscape character type in the Westmeath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027. There are no protected views or prospects in the vicinity of the proposed development. There are a number of protected structures located in the vicinity of the proposed development. These relate to the Royal Canal and include[9] - • Harbour Quay dry dock (NIAH reg no 15310149) located approximately 50m form the proposed development. • Royal Canal harbour (NIAH reg no 15310150) located approximately 60m form the proposed development. • Store/warehouse (NIAH reg no 15310227) located approximately 60m form the proposed development. The proposed development is compliant with the policies of the Westmeath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027.

3. Types and characteristics of potential impacts The likely significant effects on the environment of proposed development in relation to criteria set out under paragraphs 1 and 2, with regard to the impact of the project on the factors specified in paragraph (b)(i)(I) to (V) of the definition of 'environmental impact assessment report' in section 171A of the Act, taking into account—	

[9] Sources:
- National Inventory of Architectural Heritage
- Historic Environment Map Viewer
- Record of Protected Structures

(a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example, geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	Effects during construction, due mainly to noise and dust, are likely to be temporary to short term and limited to the immediate site environs.
(b) the nature of the impact	Construction phase effects on noise and air quality are likely to be temporary to short term, small scale and localised and are not likely to be significant within the meaning of the Directive. It can be reasonably anticipated that significant construction phase traffic effects will be avoided through implementation of standard construction phase traffic management procedures. Landscape effects are likely to be localised and in keeping with the zoning set out in the Westmeath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027. Wastewater from the development will connect to the existing foul sewer and will be treated in the existing Mullingar WWTP. Due to the nature and design of the development it will have no impact on the nearest protected structures or known archaeological features.
(c) the transboundary nature of the impact	-
(d) the intensity and complexity of the impact	It can be reasonably anticipated that any effects will not be intense or complex.
(e) the probability of the impact	The effects outlined at (b) above are likely to occur.
(f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact	Construction phase effects will be of varying frequency and can be anticipated to be insignificant to slight in magnitude and temporary to short term in duration. Once completed, effects will be insignificant and permanent.

(g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment	On the basis of the nature and scale of the proposed development and its likely effects, and taking account of the characteristics of other existing and/or permitted developments (ref Appendix II), the potential for significant cumulative impacts to arise can be considered to be negligible.
(h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact	Potential construction stage effects can be reasonably anticipated to be likely to be effectively reduced by implementation of standard construction phase environmental controls. Potential operational stage effects can be reasonably anticipated to be likely to be effectively reduced by implementation of standard traffic and waste management procedures. Compliance with the relevant policies of the Westmeath County Development Plan 2021–2027, including policies for protection of natural heritage & biodiversity, housing and green infrastructure, sustainable transportation and built heritage will further ensure avoidance of significant effects on environmental factors.

Based on review against the Schedule 7 criteria, the environmental impacts of the proposed project can be anticipated to be localised and short-term to temporary (during construction) and permanent (after construction) and not likely to be significant within the meaning of the Directive.

Article 120 of the Regulations of 2001 as amended, states that the Schedule 7A information:

a) 'shall be accompanied by any further relevant information on the characteristics of the proposed development and its likely significant effects on the environment, including, where relevant, information on how the available results of other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment carried out pursuant to European Union legislation other than the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive have been taken into account' and
b) 'may be accompanied by a description of the features, if any, of the proposed development and the measures, if any, envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment of the development.'

In relation to (a), other potentially relevant assessments are listed and commented upon in Appendix III. It is found that none have any significant bearing on the findings of this EIA Screening Report. Item 3(h) in the table above addresses (b).

8 Conclusions

It is considered that proposed social housing development at Harbour Road, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath does not need to be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment and no Environmental Impact Assessment Report is required for it.

This conclusion is based on an objective review of the characteristics of the proposed development against the requirements of the relevant legislation and has had due regard to the relevant guidance.

Appendix I - Relevant assessments of potential effects on the environment carried out pursuant to European Union legislation other than the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive

EU Legislation		Comments
Air Quality Directive	2008/50/EC	There will be no significant air emissions of significance from the proposed development during operation. Construction impacts are likely to be local short term and insignificant. As a result, no assessment is required pursuant to this Directive.
Floods Directive	2007/60/EC	No Flood Risk Assessment is required pursuant to this Directive.
Habitats and Birds Directives	92/43/EEC & 2009/147/EC	An AA Screening Report has been prepared for the proposed development. It finds that the proposed development is not likely to have any significant effect (either directly or indirectly) on any European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.
Noise Directive	2002/49/EC	Construction noise will be local, short term and insignificant. No significant noise effects are likely to occur during operation of the development. As a result, no assessment is required pursuant to this Directive.
SEA Directive	2001/42/EC	The Westmeath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 which sets out the zoning of the site area, has been subject to SEA.
Directive on Waste and repealing certain Directives (a.k.a Waste Framework Directive)	2008/98/EC	The proposed development is not anticipated to be likely to generate significant quantities of waste during construction or operation. No assessment is considered to be required pursuant to this Directive.
Water Framework Directive	2000/60/EC	The proposed development does not have significant potential to cause effects on any other watercourses and there is no requirement for any specific assessment pursuant to this Directive.

This review of assessments of potential effects on the environment carried out pursuant to the European Legislation finds that no results arising from such assessments affect the findings of this EIA screening.

Appendix II – Review of planning history in the vicinity of the proposed development for purposes of consideration of cumulative effects [10]

The below table contains the findings of a planning search for developments within a radius of 200 m of the site of the proposed development in the last 5 years. Projects considered as having no real potential likelihood of contributing to significant cumulative effects, when considered in combination with effects arising from the subject proposal, have been excluded.

The information presented in the columns below has been taken from the Local Authority planning database. Searches of the An Coimisiún Pleanála database and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage's EIA Portal found no other projects which would be considered as having real potential likelihood of contributing to significant cumulative effects.

Local Authority planning applications

Project Code	Decision	Description	Grant Date	Distance from Proposed dev. (m)	Potential for cumulative effects	Likelihood of significant cumulative effects?
156029	Conditional	Construction of a three storey (part two storey) Primary Care Centre, incorporating Doctors and Nurses, Multi-Disciplinary Consulting Treatment and Public Health Nursing Rooms and associated support facilities, a Mental Health Day Hospital, Dental Clinic and Retail Unit, associated car parking spaces and all associated site works, to include drainage, services and boundary treatments, ESB substation, switch room, water tank storage and service yard. This proposal is an amended scheme to the already approved planning applications 11/5040 and 12/5101	03/21/2017	Adjacent	This is a small-scale project with a temporary construction phase and the operational phase will have localised effects that will be in keeping with the context and character of the surrounding environment. The consent process for this project was subject to applicable EIA and AA requirements.	No
176067	Conditional	Construction of a mixed use development of 97 no. residential units, a childcare facility, commercial units and communal private and public open space at Harbour Road/Martins Lane, Robinstown (Tyrrell), Mullingar, Co Westmeath, a site of 2.75 hectares. The proposed development comprises 2 no blocks of apartments above commercial ground floor uses, Block 1 part 4/5 storey block of 16 no. apartments (9 no. 2 bed and 7 no. 3 bed units) above ground floor commercial (Classes 2 & 3) use of 475 sqm and as incorporating a communal area for the block at first floor level 63 sqm, Block 2 Part 4/5 storey block of 16 no. apartments(12 no. 2 bed and 4 no. 3 bed units) above ground	12/21/2017	59.60	This is a medium-scale project with a temporary construction phase and the operational phase will have localised effects that will be in keeping with the context and character of the surrounding environment. The consent process for this project was subject to applicable EIA and AA requirements.	No

[10] Parameters used: planning application from within the last 5 years, within a radius of 200 m around the proposed development's boundary The majority of surrounding developments are minor projects with no risk of in-combination effects. Therefore, the list provided here provides details of those permissions and applications with potential relevance to the consideration of cumulative effects in the context of this EIASR. Project descriptions are taken from the Local Authority planning database.

Project Code	Decision	Description	Grant Date	Distance from Proposed dev. (m)	Potential for cumulative effects	Likelihood of significant cumulative effects?
		floor childcare facility (245 sqm), commercial (classes 2 & 3) use of 180 sqm and as incorporating a communal area for the block at first floor level 63 sqm, construction of 65 no houses, (8no 3-bed and 57 no 4 bed) two and three storey in height with a formation of 4210 sqm of landscaped open space area incorporating , a centralized play area (pocket park) of 2,185 sqm and an open space network linked by pedestrian footpaths to Mullingar Greenway with an area of 2025 sqm 155 no car parking spaces, 50 no cycle parking spaces, primary vehicular and pedestrian access to the proposed development will be provided from a new access road from the constructed primary care centre access road, associated residential estate roads.				
21669	Conditional	The proposed development comprises of 95 no residential units, 1 no 3 storey block of apartments, 1 no studio, 4 no 1 bed, 9 no 2 bed and 2 no. 3 bed (total 16 no units), 43 no duplex/apartments, (21 no 2 bed and 22 no 3 bed), 36 no semi-detached (3/4 bed) units, a creche facility (212 sqm), integrated perimeter and centralised communal open space areas totaling 6,788 sqm, 123 no car parking spaces, 206 no bicycle parking spaces, the primary vehicular and pedestrian access to the proposed development will be provided from a new access road from the constructed primary care centre access road, associated residential estate roads. All associated hard and soft landscaping, boundary treatments, footpaths and ancillary works above and below ground	11/23/2022	45.0	This is a medium-scale project with a temporary construction phase and the operational phase will have localised effects that will be in keeping with the context and character of the surrounding environment. The consent process for this project was subject to applicable EIA and AA requirements..	No
196195	Conditional	To construct a new single storey 5 screen cinema, of gross plan area approx. 875sqm and approx. 8.625m high and associated site works	4/7/2020	82.1	This is a medium-scale project with a temporary construction phase and the operational phase will have localised effects that will be in keeping with the context and character of the surrounding environment. The consent process for this project was subject to applicable EIA and AA requirements.	No
22464	Conditional	Construction of a new part single, part two storey restaurant (internal floor area circa. 269 sq.m), circa. 6.1m high with a raised external dining area at first floor level and associated site works/car parking	6/7/2023	82.1	This is a small-scale project with a temporary construction phase and the operational phase will have localised effects that will be in keeping with the context and character of the surrounding environment. The consent process for this project was subject to applicable EIA and AA requirements.	No
22507	Conditional	Consisting of construction works to demolish part of an existing two-storey toilet block; Construct 3 no. new two storey en-suite	3/23/2023	145.2	This is a small-scale project with a temporary construction phase and the operational phase will have localised effects that	No

Project Code	Decision	Description	Grant Date	Distance from Proposed dev. (m)	Potential for cumulative effects	Likelihood of significant cumulative effects?
		toilet extensions to existing classrooms. Insert a new passenger lift into the existing building; Construct a new single storey front entrance porch; Alter parts of the existing layout to provide new toilet facilities; and carry out associated alterations, refurbishments and site works. The existing school building is within the curtilage of protected structures - Presentation Convent RPS. No 019-148 & 019-149.			will be in keeping with the context and character of the surrounding environment. The consent process for this project was subject to applicable EIA and AA requirements.	
196295	Conditional	565m2 two storey extension at the northeast corner of Colaiste Mhuire comprising of a construction studies room with prep room, a home economics room, two interconnecting classrooms and associated circulation space and all associated works including connecting into existing building and external and internal services. The proposed development is within the curtilage of the Hevey Institute, a protected structure No 019-157 under the Record of Protected Structures of Westmeath County Council Development Plan 2014-2020	2/5/2020	144.2	This is a small-scale project with a temporary construction phase and the operational phase will have localised effects that will be in keeping with the context and character of the surrounding environment. The consent process for this project was subject to applicable EIA and AA requirements.	No

An Coimisiún Pleanála planning applications

Case ID	Date	Decision	Description	Distance from proposed dev. (m)	Characteristics of the potential interactions between the projects; sources and pathways	Likelihood of significant in-combination effects
300796	31/1/2018	Grant permission with conditions	A mixed use development of 97 no. residential units, a childcare facility, commercial units and communal private and public open space	59.60	This is a medium-scale project with a temporary construction phase and the operational phase will have localised effects that will be in keeping with the context and character of the surrounding environment. The consent process for this project was subject to applicable EIA and AA requirements.	No
317479	9/10/2024	Grant permission with conditions	Construction of a restaurant with a raised external dining area and all associated works.	82.1	This is a small-scale project with a temporary construction phase and the operational phase will have localised effects that will be in keeping with the context and character of the surrounding environment. The consent process for this project was subject to applicable EIA and AA requirements.	No
307082	17/9/2020	Grant permission with conditions	Construction of a single storey 5 screen cinema.	82.1	This is a medium-scale project with a temporary construction phase and the operational phase will have localised effects that will be in keeping with the context and character of the surrounding environment. The consent process for this project was subject to applicable EIA and AA requirements.	No

Appendix III – Standard Descriptions of Effects

(from *Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports*, EPA, 2022)

Quality of Effects It is important to inform the non-specialist reader whether an effect is positive, negative or neutral	**Positive Effects** A change which improves the quality of the environment (for example, by increasing species diversity; or the improving reproductive capacity of an ecosystem, or by removing nuisances or improving amenities).
	Neutral Effects No effects or effects that are imperceptible, within normal bounds of variation or within the margin of forecasting error.
	Negative/adverse Effects A change which reduces the quality of the environment (for example, lessening species diversity or diminishing the reproductive capacity of an ecosystem; or damaging health or property or by causing nuisance).
Describing the Significance of Effects ''Significance' is a concept that can have different meanings for different topics – in the absence of specific definitions for different topics the following definitions may be useful (also see *Determining Significance* below.).	**Imperceptible** An effect capable of measurement but without significant consequences.
	Not significant An effect which causes noticeable[2] changes in the character of the environment but without significant consequences.
	Slight Effects An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities.
	Moderate Effects An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner that is consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends.
	Significant Effects An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment.
	Very Significant An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity significantly alters most of a sensitive aspect of the environment.
	Profound Effects An effect which obliterates sensitive characteristics
Describing the Extent and Context of Effects Context can affect the perception of significance. It is important to establish if the effect is unique or, perhaps, commonly or increasingly experienced.	**Extent** Describe the size of the area, the number of sites, and the proportion of a population affected by an effect.
	Context Describe whether the extent, duration, or frequency will conform or contrast with established (baseline) conditions (is it the biggest, longest effect ever?)

Describing the Probability of Effects Descriptions of effects should establish how likely it is that the predicted effects will occur – so that the CA can take a view of the balance of risk over advantage when making a decision.	**Likely Effects** The effects that can reasonably be expected to occur because of the planned project if all mitigation measures are properly implemented.
	Unlikely Effects The effects that can reasonably be expected not to occur because of the planned project if all mitigation measures are properly implemented.
Describing the Duration and Frequency of Effects 'Duration' is a concept that can have different meanings for different topics – in the absence of specific definitions for different topics the following definitions may be useful.	**Momentary Effects** Effects lasting from seconds to minutes
	Brief Effects Effects lasting less than a day
	Temporary Effects Effects lasting less than a year
	Short-term Effects Effects lasting one to seven years.
	Medium-term Effects Effects lasting seven to fifteen years.
	Long-term Effects Effects lasting fifteen to sixty years.
	Permanent Effects Effects lasting over sixty years
	Reversible Effects Effects that can be undone, for example through remediation or restoration
	Frequency of Effects Describe how often the effect will occur. (once, rarely, occasionally, frequently, constantly – or hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, annually)

Describing the Types of Effects	**Indirect Effects (a.k.a. Secondary Effects)** Impacts on the environment, which are not a direct result of the project, often produced away from the project site or because of a complex pathway.
	Cumulative Effects The addition of many minor or significant effects, including effects of other projects, to create larger, more significant effects.
	'Do-Nothing Effects' The environment as it would be in the future should the subject project not be carried out.
	`Worst case' Effects The effects arising from a project in the case where mitigation measures substantially fail.
	Indeterminable Effects When the full consequences of a change in the environment cannot be described.

	Irreversible Effects When the character, distinctiveness, diversity or reproductive capacity of an environment is permanently lost.
	Residual Effects The degree of environmental change that will occur after the proposed mitigation measures have taken effect.
	Synergistic Effects Where the resultant effect is of greater significance than the sum of its constituents, (e.g. combination of SOx and NOx to produce smog).

Appendix IV - Competency of Authors

Paul Fingleton, the lead author, has an MSc in Rural and Regional Resources Planning (with specialisation in EIA) from the University of Aberdeen. Paul is a member of the International Association for Impact Assessment as well as the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment. He has over twenty-five years' experience working in the area of Environmental Assessment. Over this period, he has been involved in a diverse range of projects including contributions to, and co-ordination of, numerous complex EIARs and EIA screening reports. He has also contributed to and supervised the preparation of numerous AAs and AA screenings.

Paul is the lead author of the current EPA Guidelines[11] and accompanying Advice Notes[12] on EIARs. He has been involved in all previous editions of these statutory guidelines. He also provides a range of other EIA related consultancy services to the EPA. Paul is regularly engaged by various planning authorities and other consent authorities to provide specialised EIA advice.

Andrew Reynolds, senior EIA consultant, has experience working as part of team projects and in the coordination and preparation of multiple EIA documents on behalf of multi-nationals and infrastructural providers. He has been involved in a diverse range of projects including contributions to, and co-ordination of, numerous complex EIARs, and EIA screening reports. He has also contributed to and coordinated the preparation of numerous AA screenings.

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

[12] Advice notes on current practice in the preparation of Environmental Impact Assessment Reports, EPA, 2003