AtkinsRéalis

EIA Screening

Galway County Council

June 2025

N59 OUGHTERARD FOOTBRIDGE

Disclaimer: This report contains sensitive information on Freshwater Pearl Mussel and must be redacted prior to publishing of this document publicly.

Notice

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1. Introduction

Galway County Council have appointed AtkinsRéalis to prepare an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report for the Development of the Oughterard Footbridge (hereafter referred to as the proposed development) in Oughterard Co. Galway. The EIA screening report will be submitted as part of a planning application for the proposed development to An Bord Pleanála.

1.1 Project Overview

The proposed footbridge is located within the Town of Oughterard, Co. Galway and will cross the Owenriff River ca. 150m downstream (east) of the existing N59 road bridge. The footbridge will be approximately 48m span. Abutments will be setback ca. 2.5m and 6.2m from the riverbank crest on the north and south side, respectively.

The proposed footbridge crosses over the Owenriff River. The proposed north abutment is on a riverside path near Carrowmanagh Rd, and the south abutment is in an area of woodland (currently private residential property). The footbridge approach paths tie into a proposed zebra crossings over Carrowmanagh Rd on the north side, and over N59 Clifden Road on the south side (adjacent to the Claddagh Credit Union).

A location map for the proposed development is shown in Figure 1-1.

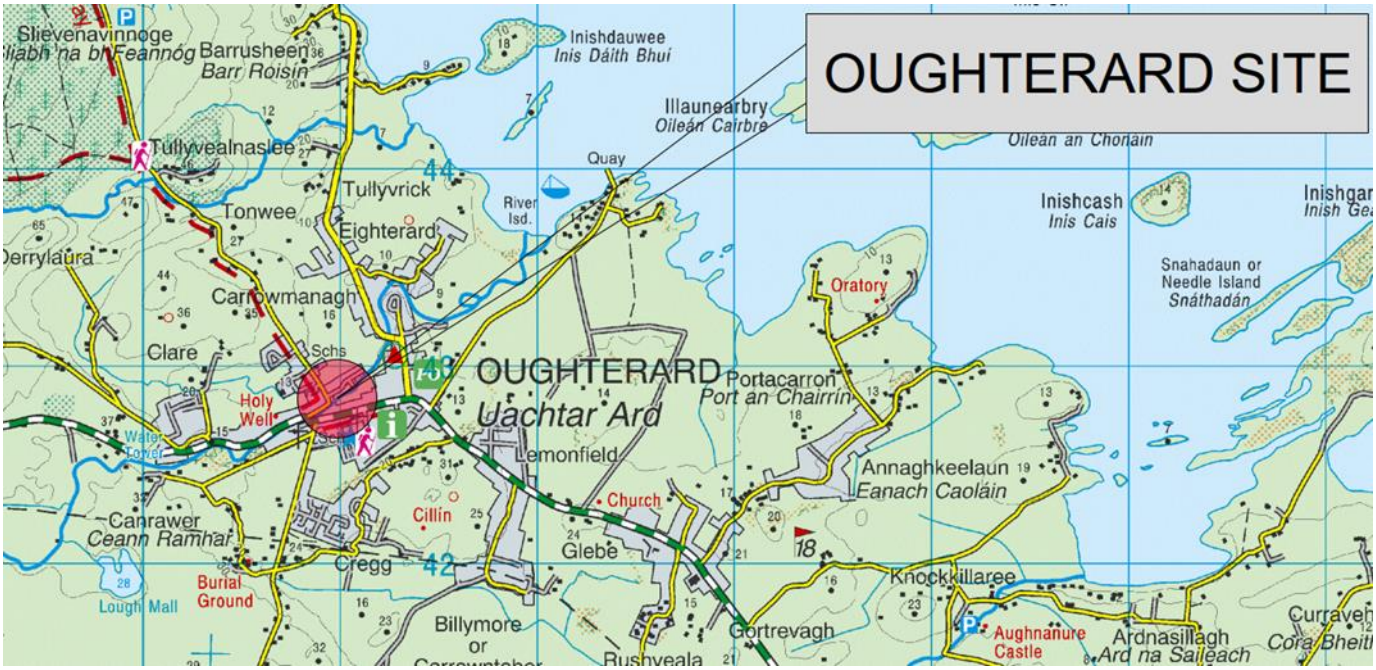

Figure 1-1 - Site Location Plan

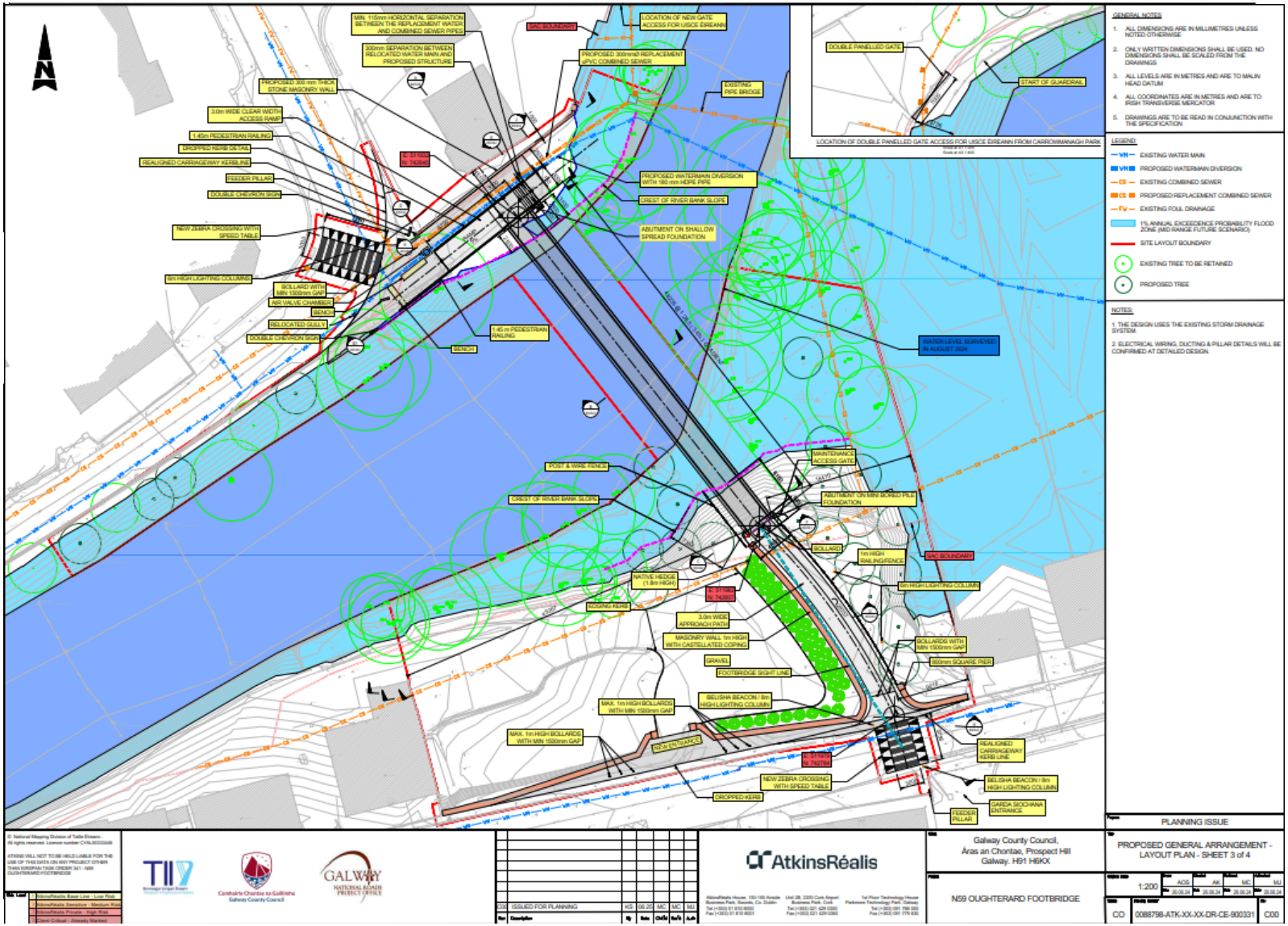

Figure 1-2 - Proposed development layout plan

1.2 Purpose of this Report

This report has been prepared to support the planning application on behalf of Galway County Council in relation to the development of Oughterard Footbridge, Oughterard, Co. Galway - to include for the construction of a single span crossing of the river ca. 150m downstream of the existing N59 road bridge. Refer to Figure 1-2 for the site plan. The purpose of this report is to determine whether the project requires the preparation of an environmental impact assessment report (EIAR). The proposed development has been screened to generate a summarised overview of the potential effects on the receiving environment, and in the context of relevant statutory requirements. A Stage 1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) has been prepared (AtkinsRéalis, 2025). The project has been assessed with regards to the likely significant effects of the project on European sites within the zone of influence of the proposed development. The AA Screening Report concluded that the proposed development, cannot be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed works will not, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, give rise to any impacts which would constitute significant effects on Lough Corrib SAC (site code: 000297), in view of their conservation objectives.

The Natura Impact Statement (NIS) prepared by AtkinsRéalis (2025) concluded that '*Where the potential for adverse effects on the SAC were identified, mitigation measures have been prescribed. The measures ensure that impacts from the proposed works are avoided or minimised such that they will not adversely affect the integrity of the site. In conclusion, given the full and proper implementation of the mitigation prescribed in this NIS, there is no reasonable scientific doubt remaining as to the absence of adverse effects on Lough Corrib SAC, or any other Natura 2000 site, in view of their conservation objectives'.*

1.3 Site Zoning

Under the Galway County Council Development Plan 2022-2028, the following zoning objective has been identified within the footprint of the proposed development:

- TI - Transport Infrastructure;
- Water/Rivers/Streams;
- OS - Open Space / Recreation & Amenity; and,
- C1 – Town Centre.

It is considered that the proposed development is compatible with the zoning requirements of the development strategy for the area, under the Galway County Council Development Plan 2022-2028, providing for transport infrastructure within a small town.

2. Receiving Environment

2.1 Population and Human Health

The proposed footbridge is located ca. 150m from the existing Road Bridge within the town of Oughterard. This existing bridge, does not have pedestrian facilities, and is currently unsafe for pedestrians. CSO have reported a population of 1,846 within Oughterard Town in 2022, and the town is considered under the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 as a Small Growth Town *'by virtue of the population of the town and the extensive level of local services, employment and residential stock that it offers to residents.'* (GCC, 2022).

There are a number of sensitive receptors within the vicinity of the proposed development, including residential properties, a church and retail stores. The north ramp of the proposed scheme is located adjacent to a private residential property, the residents of which will have direct sight of the proposed footbridge. However, the footbridge has been designed so as to minimise visual impacts to these residents as much as possible. Given the main reason for this footbridge to provide a safe crossing point of the Owenriff River for pedestrians, and not to form part of a cycleway / walkway it is expected that this footbridge will be used by local populations walking short distances to/from school and work etc.

2.2 Hydrology

The proposed development is located within the Corrib Water Framework Directive (WFD) Catchment area and BallycuirkeLoughStream_SC_010 sub-catchment. There is 1no. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) watercourse within the site of the proposed development; the Owenriff River (IE_WE_30O020200) which is directly crossed by the development. There is 1no. watercourse within the vicinity of the site - the CANRAWER_EAST stream which flows in an easterly direction into the Owenriff River and is located ca. 110m from the proposed development. The Owenriff River discharges to Lough Corrib ca. 1.9km downstream of the proposed works area. The Owenriff River has been assigned 'Poor' status under the Water Framework Directive (WFD) 2016-2021 and is 'At Risk' of not attaining 'Good' status by 2027. Q-values, a biological water quality metric based on the composition of a river's macroinvertebrates community, shows that the most recent water quality data from an EPA sampling station 'Br upstream of Lough Corrib' in 2021, had a Q-value of Q4-5 High water quality ca. 500m downstream of the proposed works. At a sampling location 'D/s Sewage Treatment Works – Oughterard' (600m downstream) the water quality was rated at Q4 Good water quality. (Source: EPA Maps).

Based on the findings of the Stage 1 Appropriate Assessment Screening report (AtkinsRéalis, 2025) significant adverse effects, either alone or in-combination, to European sites arising from the proposed development cannot be ruled out.

2.3 Ecology

There are 2no. European sites within the zone of influence (ZoI) of the proposed development, as shown in Figure 2-1 and 2-2; Lough Corrib SAC (000297) which the proposed footbridge is located within, and Lough Corrib SPA (004051) which is located ca. 1.8km downstream of the proposed footbridge.

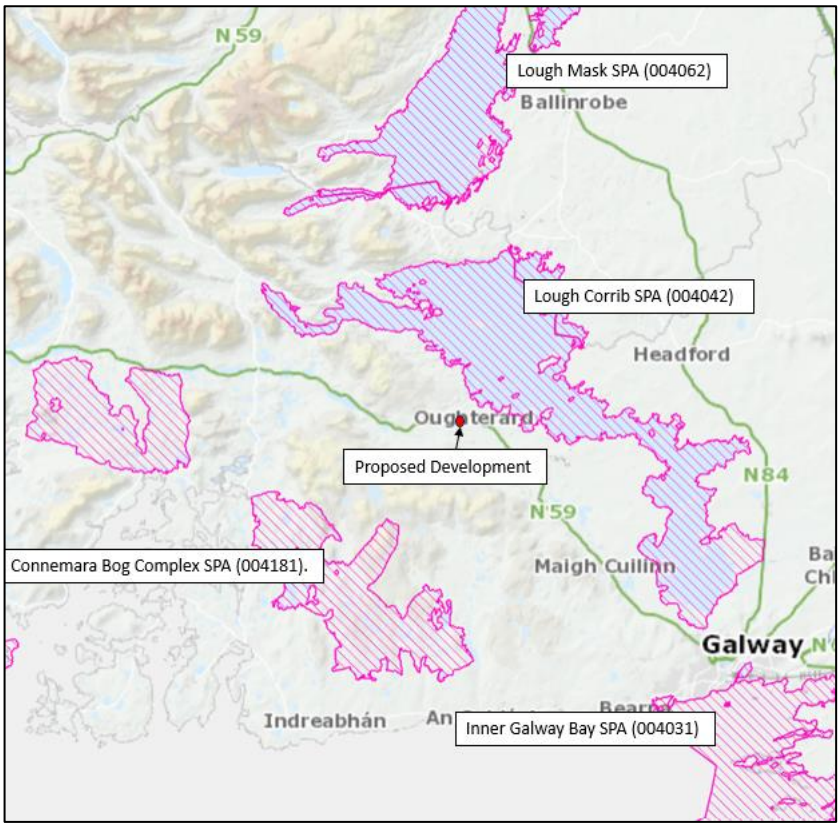

Figure 2-1 - SPAs in the vicinity of the proposed development

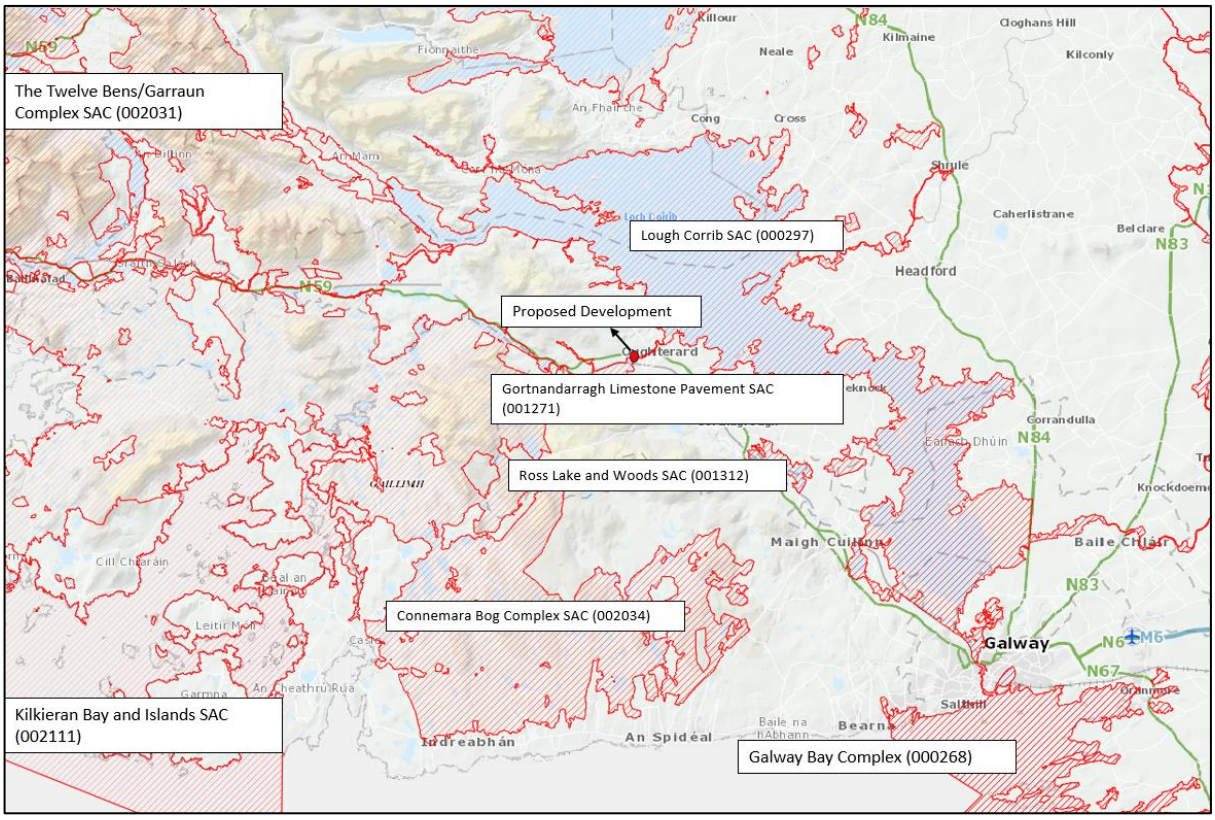

Figure 2-2 - SACs in the vicinity of the proposed development

There are multiple qualifying interests associated with the Lough Corrib SAC including Freshwater Pearl Mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*), White-clawed Crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes),* Sea Lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*), Brook Lamprey (*Lampetra planeri*), Salmon (*Salmo salar*), Lesser Horseshoe Bat (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*), Otter (*Lutra lutra*), Slender Naiad (*Najas flexilis*) and Slender Green Feather-moss (*Hamatocaulis vernicosus*) amongst others. The habitat within the proposed project boundary may provide suitable refuges, particularly for juvenile crayfish. However, there are no records of Crayfish on the western side of Lough Corrib. Introduction of exotic crayfish species or the crayfish fungal plague (*Aphanomyces astaci*) could have a serious impact on the native crayfish population.

The proposed works are located on land adjacent to a *Margaritifera*-sensitive Area (category: 'Catchments of SAC populations listed in S.I. No. 296 of 2009'). A freshwater pearl mussel survey was carried out in the Owenriff River in 2014.

The AA Screening Report (AtkinsRéalis, 2025) states '

There are no Natural Heritage Areas (NHA) and 19no. proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA) located within the Zone of Influence of the proposed development. Lough Corrib pNHA (000297) is located ca. 1.8km downstream from the proposed development, and is the only pNHA with indirect connectivity to the proposed development.

2.4 Hydrogeology

There are no wells within the project site, with the closest borehole located ca. 2.5km southeast of the site. The well use is reported by the GSI (2025) as Other Use and is located to a 500m locational accuracy. A well has been identified on historic mapping (Tailte Éireann, 2025) within ca. 20m of the northern access, however there is no evidence to suggest that this well is still in use.

There are no designated Public or Group Drinking Water Supply Source Protection Zones within 15km of the proposed development (GSI, 2025).

The proposed development is within the Maam-Clonbur Groundwater Body and is currently 'Not at Risk' with respect to the Water Framework Directive (WFD) Groundwater Body Risk and is classified as 'Good' with respect of meeting WFD goals by 2027 (EPA Code: IE_WE_G_0006) (GSI, 2025).

The proposed development is underlain by a Locally Important Aquifer – Bedrock which is Moderately Productive only in local zones (GSI, 2025).

Excavation works are required for the installation of foundations and other infrastructure and shallow perched water / groundwater may be encountered during such works. Groundwater vulnerability underlying the site is classified as 'High', and should groundwater be encountered, the following measures will be implemented:

- Any groundwater temporarily dewatered during the excavation works, will be stored in a contained area and treated off-site;
- The Contractor will be required to provide a Site-specific dewatering plan, clearly setting out proposed excavation methodology, estimated dewatering rates, details of proposed treatment system, and discharge location.

- The time period that excavations are left uncovered will be reduced in so far as reasonably practical with impermeable coverings being used to cover excavations over night or in times of heavy rainfall during working hours. These coverings will be secured at night to prevent mammals becoming trapped.
- Excavations will not be carried out during or following times of prolonged rainfall.

2.5 Geology

The proposed development is underlain by Dark limestone with thin shales of the Owenriff Member and Dolomitic limestone, shale of the Waterfall Member (GSI, 2025). The closest karst features are located ca. 0.46km from the existing N59 Oughterard Bridge – Borehole (1123NWK002) and Borehole (1123NWK001) both located to within a 20m accuracy and reported by a site investigation report completed by Irish Drilling Ltd (1994) as an 'Empty cavity' and 'Not infilled' respectively (GSI, 2025).

There are no recorded landslide events in the vicinity of the site. Landslide susceptibility within the site and surrounds is classified as 'Made' ground and 'Low' (GSI, 2025).

There are 4no. Geological Heritage Areas within 5km of the proposed development including: Owenriff Falls (GY109) located ca. 0.15km from the proposed development, Glengowla Lead Mine (GY062) located ca. 3.2km from the proposed development, Oldchapel Quarry (GY107) located ca. 1.89km from proposed development and Lough Corrib (GY093) located ca. 1.2km from the proposed development. Refer to Figure 2-3.

Figure 2-3 - Geological Heritage Sites in the vicinity of the proposed development

2.6 Flood Risk

The site has been assessed in accordance with the “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management” Guidelines. As part of the sequential test, the OPW flood hazard maps have been consulted, as have the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment Maps produced by the OPW. The OPW (2025) CFRAM River Flood maps indicate Low, Medium and High probability of flooding on the Owenriff River. According to the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028, the Owenriff River is within Flood Zone A and the surrounding lands are within Flood Zone C[1].

There are 6no. past flood events within 3km of the N59 Oughterard Bridge, 3no. of which are recurrent.

An OPW Section 50 report was completed by SLR Environmental Consulting (Ireland) Ltd (November 2024) and approved by the OPW. This report concluded that *‘the soffit level of the proposed bridge is at least 772mm above the peak 1% AEP MRFS flood event in the river. This is in accordance with the OPW requirements which sets the freeboard being at least 300mm above the flood level. The proposed pedestrian bridge will be outside of the 1% AEP MRFS flood extent. Therefore, it won’t have an effect on the flood levels in the river’.*

2.7 Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

The existing Oughterard Bridge is a NIAH feature (30326008) which is within ca. 150m of the proposed development, as shown on Figure 2-4.

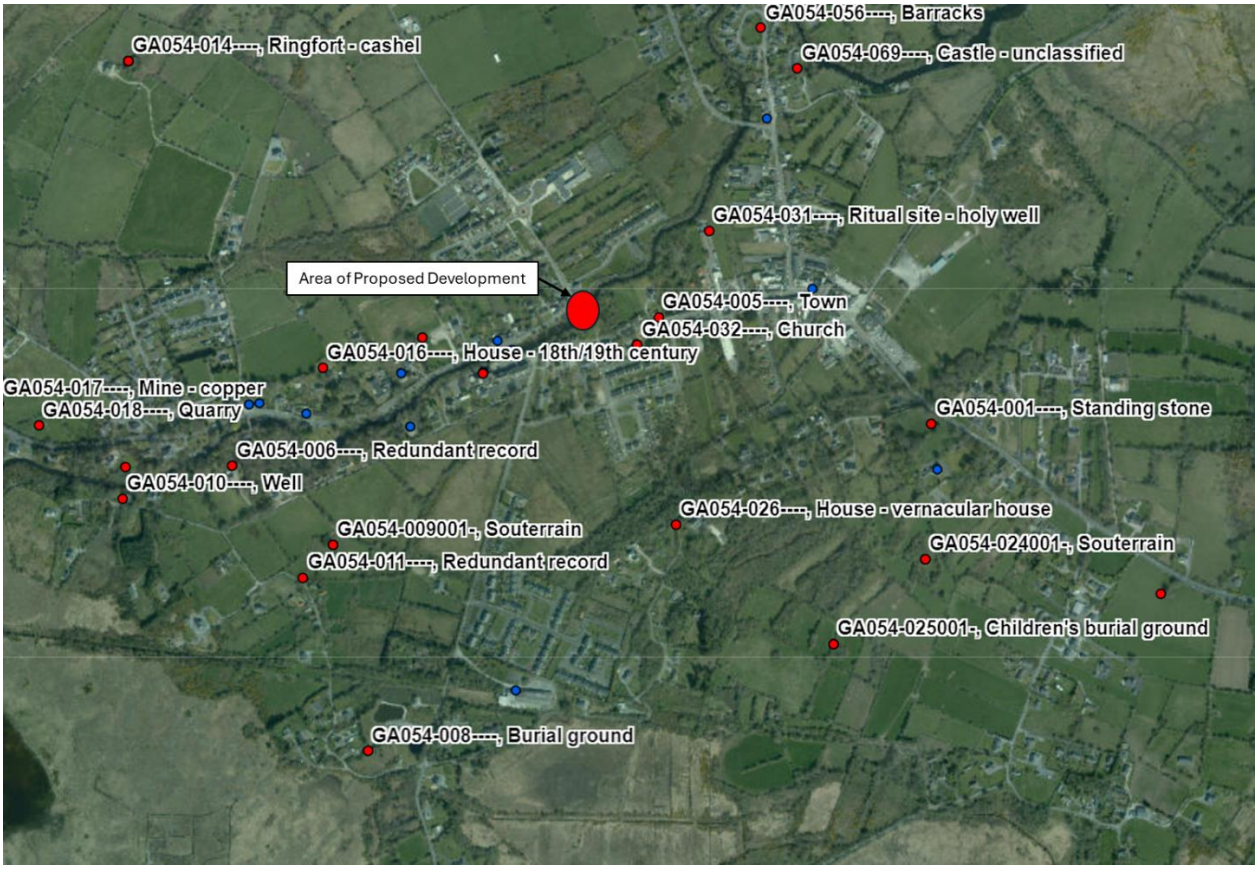

Figure 2-4 - SMRs and NIAHs in the vicinity of the proposed development

[1] https://consult.galway.ie/ga/system/files/materials/17/G19014%20Oughterard%20FRM%2020210514.pdf

2.8 Air Quality and Climate

According to the EPA (2025), the current baseline air quality index in the area is 'Good' for Zone D: Rural Ireland. It is noted that the information from monitoring instruments at representative locations in the location may not reflect local incidents of air pollution. The closest monitoring station to the proposed development is Rahoon (Station Code GA03) located ca. 23km south-west of the site in sub-urban Galway.

Sensitive receptors within the vicinity of the proposed development include residential properties, a church and retail stores.

2.9 Landscape and Visual

According to the Landscape Character Assessment for County Galway, the proposed development lies within the Lake Environs Landscape Character Type which is identified as having an 'iconic' sensitivity.

There are no view points located within the vicinity of the proposed development, with the N59 through Oughterard forming part of the Galway Clifden Scenic Route and the Lough Corrib Scenic Route.

The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development are evaluated further within Section 3.4.2 of this report ('*Location of proposed development - The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development*') as required under Schedule 7 of the relevant regulations.

3. Description of the Proposed Development

3.1 Nature and Extent of the Proposed Development

The proposed development consists of the construction of a new low, steel bow-string truss pedestrian footbridge over the Owenriff River, located approximately 150m downstream (north-east) of the existing N59 road bridge, in the townlands of Cregg, Carrowmanagh, and Fough West, Oughterard, County Galway.

The proposed footbridge will be up to approximately 3.6m in height, and approximately 48.2m in length, with a 3m clear deck width. It will be a single-span footbridge with abutments to either side of the Owenriff River, and there will be no instream works. It will also contain a 3m clear width access ramp to tie into the Carrowmanagh Road to the north-west with stepped access to the riverside walkway. A new pedestrian crossing with speed table is proposed on Carrowmanagh Road with realigned kerb line. A path is proposed to tie into the N59 Clifden Road to the south-east with a new pedestrian crossing with speed table, and realigned carriageway kerb line. Works will include the demolition and rebuilding/realignment of the existing boundary wall to the existing dwelling to the north (adjacent to the riverside walkway) and to the existing dwelling to the south known as The Old Barracks. Ancillary works will include walls, fencing, pedestrian railings, bollards, signage, lighting, benches, hard and soft landscaping, including compensatory tree planting at Carrowmanagh Park, the diversion/replacement of an existing watermain and combined sewer, and a temporary construction compound on lands at Station Road, Oughterard.

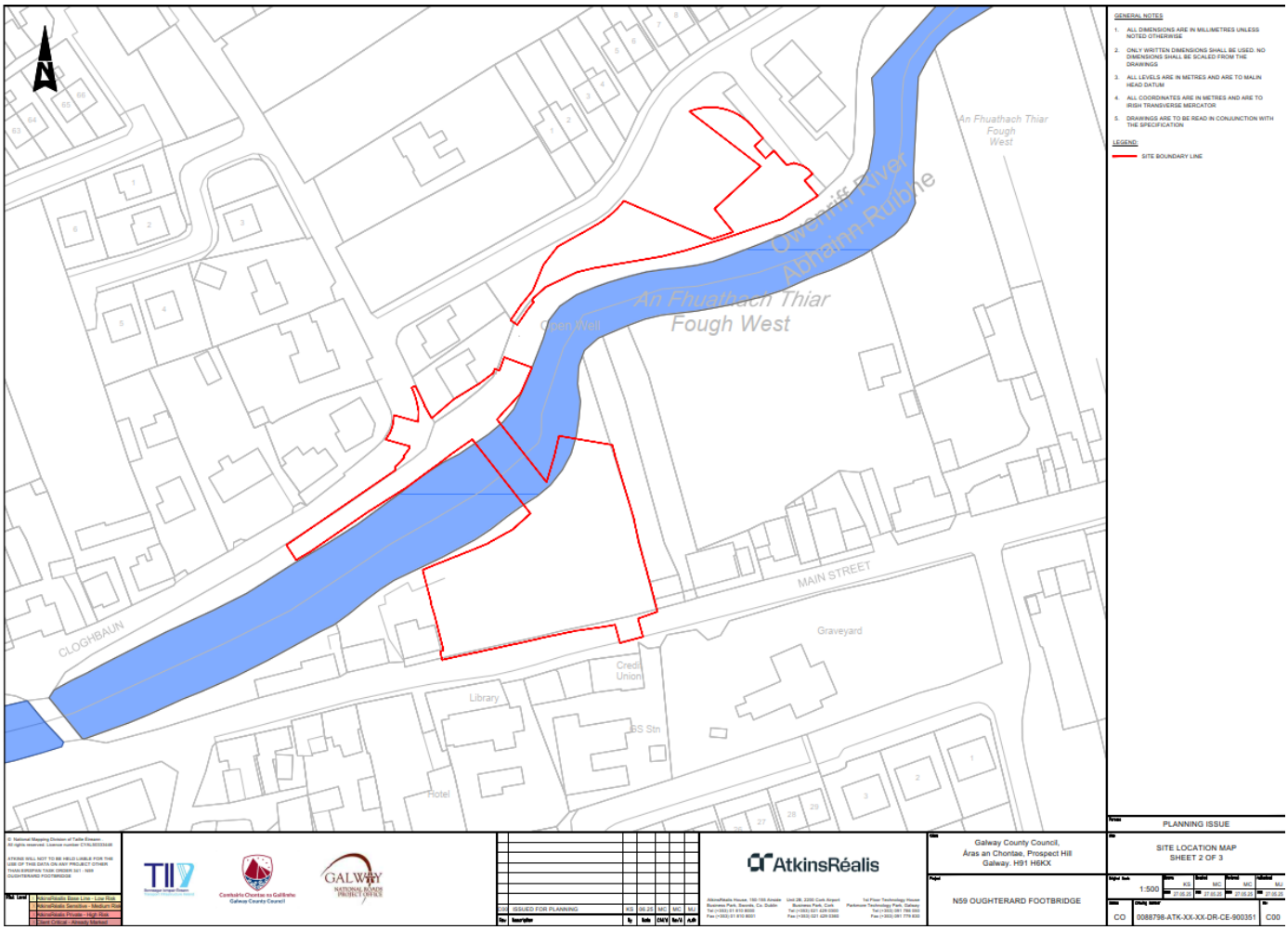

Figure 3-1 - Proposed development red-line Boundary including Carrowmanagh Park proposed replacement tree planting (1 of 2)

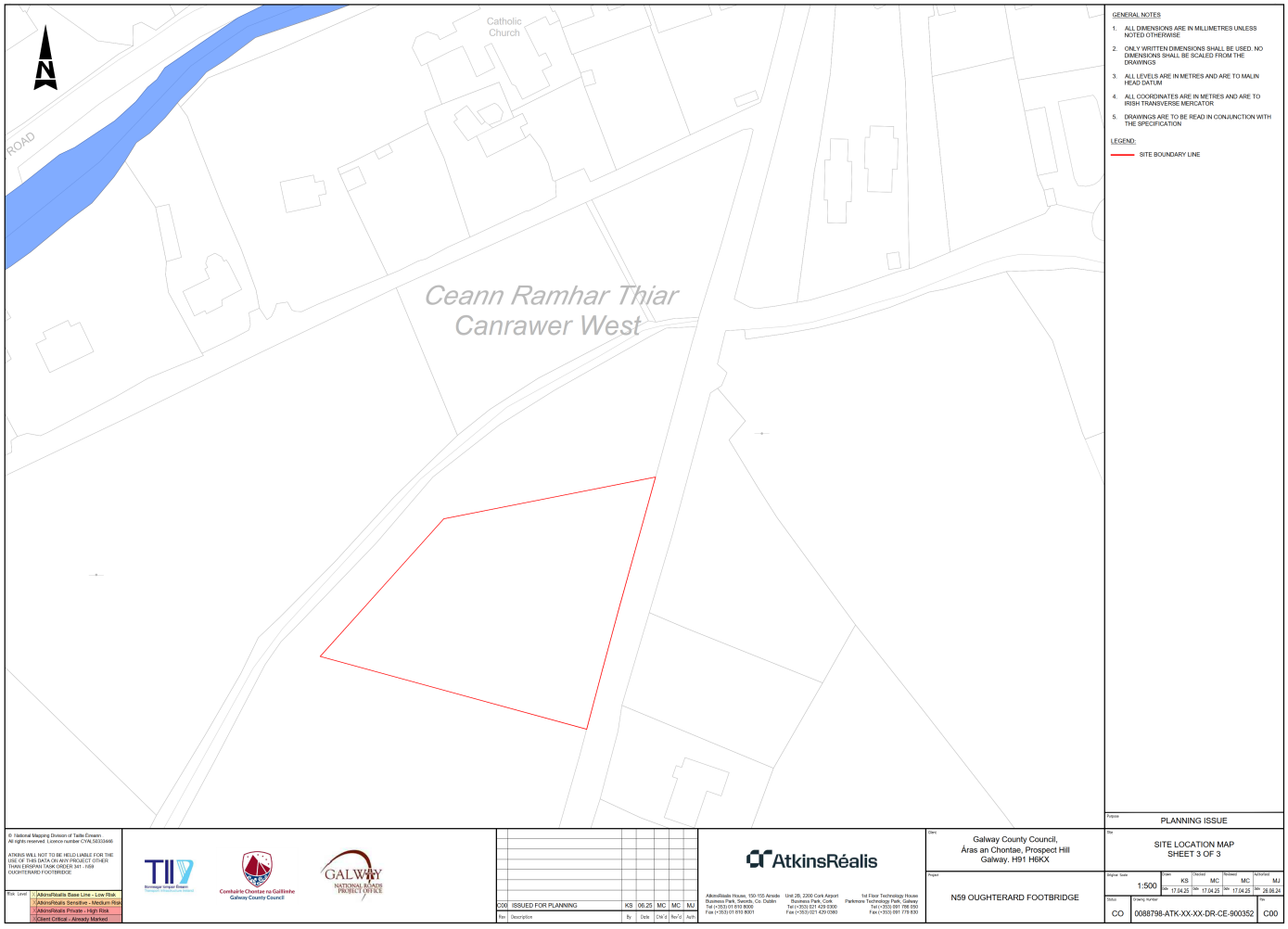

Figure 3-2 - Proposed development red-line boundary – site compound (2 of 2)

3.2 Construction

Details on the construction of the footbridge are discussed in the following sections of this report. Construction will go through a number of stages starting with a site investigation. Based on the findings of the site investigation, a number of pieces of enabling works will be carried out before the start of construction.

3.2.1 Site investigation

The following site investigations will be carried out include:

- North abutment/ramp:
  - Slit trenches to confirm the arrangement of underground utilities and to determine the bedrock profile over the ramp/abutment extents.
- South side (abutment, crane pad and approach path):
  - Trial/inspection pits.
  - Cable percussive boring and/or rotary coring.
  - Slit trenches to confirm the arrangement of underground utilities.

A temporary site compound will be set up for approx. 1-2 weeks. The compound will be setup at least 50m away from the Owenriff River (Figure 3-2).

3.2.2 Enabling Works

A site compound set up before commencement of the works (15 days). The site compound will be located at least 50m away from the Owenriff River. The location proposed for the site compound is shown on Drg. No. 0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900014. The proposed location is a field on Station Rd owned by Galway CC c. 300m south-west of the site for the proposed footbridge An ecology site survey was carried out on 29/1/25 at the proposed site. A drainage ditch runs around the perimeter of the field. The proposed site compound will provide a 10m buffer zone to the ditch. A Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA) has been undertaken for the proposed site compound location (see Updated Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment: N59 Oughterard Footbridge, Oughterard, Co. Galway. Doc. ref. J3497_OughterardFootbridgeAddendum_CHIA_v0.8). The site compound is a contractor designed element. For preliminary design purposes, the proposals assume that the site compound needs to accommodate a temporary set-down area for the prefabricated footbridge sections and a turning circle for heavy goods vehicles. On this basis, the required area of the site compound would be approximately 4500m^2, and approximately 1300m^3 of hardcore/gravel would be used to build up temporary access roads, paths and working area. The Contractor will design the site compound and may determine that a smaller area is sufficient.

Vibration monitoring will be installed on buildings adjacent to the proposed works. Trigger levels will be set to ensure that potential vibration effects are limited to acceptable levels.

All plant and equipment will be maintained, refuelled, and stored at the compound location. Oil will be stored in an appropriately contained bunded facility remote from the river.

Site clearance will be undertaken over the extents required for the proposed works (5 days). Trees will be removed (10 days) as specified in the tree impact/preservation plan (ca. 60 no.). A total of 60 trees along the riverbank are to be removed 31 Ash, 12 sycamore, 14 Alder, 2 Willow and 1 Hawthorn. 1no. existing sycamore trees will be removed on Carrowmanagh Park. Tree branches within 3m of the proposed footbridge will need to be removed. These works will be undertaken by a qualified arborist under the supervision of the contractor's ecologist.

Set up fencing (approx. 50m length in total) along the works boundary.

A robust fence (Herras type fence complete with debris netting) will be erected on the riverbank between the works area (5 days). The required length of fence will change with each stage of construction as the works progress (the max. required length of fence is approx. 40m and 70m on the north and south side of the river, respectively). Any water which accumulates within excavations shall be pumped out of works areas, collected in storage tanks, and disposed off-site. A range of silt control measures (such as silt fences, mats, wattles etc.) will be installed on the riverbanks. Silt control fences will also be installed on the riverbanks.

Protective fencing will be erected along around trees to be retained (5 days) – as recommended in the Arboricultural Assessment report. Where necessary, ground protection will be installed to shield soil from damage during construction.

Temporary lighting at the site will be installed for security and safety purposes. All temporary lighting will be required to meet the lighting requirements set out above with regards to preventing light spillage and any associated negative impacts on the local environment. Any overnight lighting will be kept to a minimum and away from the river.

A ca. 60m length of existing masonry wall along the frontage of the dwelling on the south side (Old Barracks) adjacent to the N59 Clifden Road will be temporarily dismantled (5 days) to enable access for plant, components, materials etc. to the site. The masonry will be set aside for when the wall is rebuilt/realigned after the works are complete.

On the north riverbank, the existing masonry boundary wall around the adjacent house (approx. 25m length) will be dismantled and masonry will be set aside to be re-used (5 days).

The water main and combined sewer replacement works on the north riverbank will be carried out during a dry weather forecast period (5 days), as this will minimise flows in the combined sewer and reduce the risk of potential siltation impacts associated with excavations. The expected duration of the works is up to 5 no. days.

On the north riverbank adjacent to the boundary wall, a trench will be excavated to approx. 1.4m depth below ground level (BGL) to access the buried pipes. The excavated fill (approx. 60m3) will be set aside at the site compound away from the river. The existing pipes will be replaced as follows:

- The existing 225mm dia. concrete sewer pipe will be replaced with a 300mm dia. uPVC pipe. This will be carried out by laying plastic sheeting and absorbent materials on the ground to catch any sewerage spills. A jet-vac truck (expected 10 to 12 m^3 capacity) will be set up on Carrowmanagh Rd adjacent to the site. A temporary over-pumping bypass will be provided from the manhole on Carrowmanagh Rd along the riverbank to the sewer side spur manhole (buried) on the grass amenity area on Carrowmanagh Park. The capacity of the required over-pump bypass will be based on flow estimates. The temporary bypass will be continuous without joints along the riverbank to minimise the risk of leaks. Test the over-pumping system and ensure a back-up is available in case it fails. Jet cleaning of the existing sewer between the manholes.
- The sewer pipe to be replaced at the manholes will be plugged. Collection of sewerage in the jet-vac truck during the sewer replacement works will be undertaken. In the unlikely event that the capacity of the jet-vac truck is exceeded, the excess sewerage shall be taken by the temporary over-pump bypass. Remove the existing concrete sewer pipe by loosening fittings (a concrete disc cutter may be needed). The existing sewer should be empty after jet cleaning, but any remaining sewerage in the pipe shall be drained into a container. Bung the existing sewer pipe and remove it. The holes in the manholes will be enlarged to accommodate the larger diameter of the proposed sewer pipe. Power tools will be used with vacuum dust extraction to avoid potential ecology impacts. Next the installation of the new 300mm dia. uPVC sewer pipe between the manholes. The system will be tested and infilled. The manhole bungs will be removed and the over-pumping bypass will be flushed with water. It is envisaged that a sewer manhole at the proposed site compound on Station Rd will be used.
- The existing 100mm PVC dia. water main will be replaced with a 180mm dia. HDPE pipe and realigned outside the footprint of the proposed north abutment/ramp. An indicative methodology is shown below:
  - Remove the existing PVC water main pipe (a disc cutter may be needed).
  - Install the new HDPE water main pipe and connect to the existing pipe with bushings/reducers.
  - Test the system and backfill.
  - After the sewer and water main works are complete, the excavation will be reinstated with the excavated material.

The adjacent masonry boundary wall will then be rebuilt (25m length, 800mm height and 300mm width) in a revised alignment to achieve 2.5m clearance to the proposed north abutment/ramp (5 days). The underside of the boundary wall foundation will vary in depth from 0.6m to 1.4m bgl.

The following enabling works will be needed to accommodate the proposed footbridge assembly and lifting operations in The Old Barracks private property:

- The area under and around the proposed Liebherr LG 1750 crane shall be cleared of vegetation and topsoil (approx. 380m^2). The ground will be regraded to the required level. Any soft spots shall be replaced with suitable fill. The temporary crane pad/platform is a contractor designed element which will be subject to various technical and environmental requirements/constraints. It will be based on geotechnical design to be carried out after ground investigations are carried out after planning. The following is envisaged:
  - Geotextile strengthening (approx. 640m^2) and a sub-base of compacted crushed rock or gravel (approx. 600mm thick equating to 380m^3 in total) shall be laid under the proposed crane pads as necessary. The use of an interlocking, modular mat system will be considered by the Contractor to reduce the depth of sub-base required, subject to Ground Investigations.

- A prefabricated crane platform consisting of an RC slab (approx. 300mm thick), prefabricated columns, and precast strip footings on upfill will be installed where the ground falls away towards the boundary with the adjacent house on the east side (Ringabella). The estimated total volume of reinforced concrete is 70m3. Rotary core piles may be used. Ground investigations carried out on the north riverbank in 2024 found that the vibration effects of 100mm outside diameter rotary coring was 'easily noticeable' on the human perception scale at a distance of 5m. The proposed small diameter rotary piles for the temporary crane platform would be c. 30m from the edge of the river. The expected vibration effects on adjacent buildings are also expected to be within allowable limits to avoid structural damage or excessive disturbance to residents. Vibration monitoring will be implemented with trigger levels to ensure that vibration effects on sensitive receptors are within acceptable limits. A before and after condition survey of adjacent buildings will also be undertaken. The works will be restricted to typical periods.

- There is an existing buried combined sewer (150mm dia. at approx. 4m depth) which runs west to east approx. 2m south of the proposed south abutment. This is within the influence zone of the Liebherr crane pad loads. This buried pipe will be assessed after ground investigations are carried out after planning. It is expected that the surcharge effects on the buried pipe will be within acceptable limits given it is 4m depth below ground level. The crane pads, hardstanding area and temporary crane platform will be designed to ensure that load constraints are satisfied.
- A 5m wide area shall be cleared and graded to enable assembly of the crane main boom. Temporary trestles will be set up due to the uneven ground.
- An approx. 8m wide area shall be cleared for assembly of the footbridge sections. This will require removal of approx. 60m^3 of existing fill, and a similar quantity of Class 6N2 upfill (crushed rock/gravel) will be needed to build up a temporary footbridge assembly area. The excavated fill will be set aside at the site compound to be used for reinstatement after completion of the works. Temporary trestles will need to be set up due to the uneven ground.

3.2.3 Construction Works

The expected methodology for the construction works is shown below with indicative material quantities and timescales:

1. For the north abutment and ramp:
   a. Excavate ca. 70m^3 of existing fill down to bedrock level which is expected at 1.4m below ground level (BGL) (5 days).
   b. Pour ca. 3m^3 of in-situ blinding concrete (ca. 75mm thick) and cure (10 days).
   c. Install PC foundations and substructures (total ca. 90m^3 of concrete) (2 days).
   d. Backfill around the edge of the structure (2 days).
   e. Seal joints between precast elements (5 days).
   f. Install 2 no. bearings (5 days).
   g. Install parapets (24m length) (5 days).

2. For the south abutment:
   a. Excavate ca. 10m^3 of existing fill (5 days).

b. Install bored mini-RC piles (1m^3 of concrete) (5 days).

c. Lay ca. 1m^3 of concrete blinding and cure (ca. 75mm thick) (10 days).

e. Construct a RC pile cap and cure (7m^3 of concrete) (15 days).

f. Backfill around the edge of the structure (2 days)

g. Install 2 no. bearings(5 days).

3. For footbridge installation:

a. Mobilise and set up a Liebherr LG 1750 crane to site on the south side in the curtilage of the Old Barracks (2 days).

b. Set up trestles in the footbridge assembly area.

c. Transport the 3 no. prefabricated footbridge sections to site. They will be transported either directly from the steel fabricator to The Old Barracks, or from a temporary set-down area nearby (e.g., the site compound).

d. Assemble the footbridge in the assembly area (1 day) The prefabricated steel superstructure consists of approximately 8m^3 of structural steel, 7m^3 of glass reinforced polymer (GRP) decking, and 96m length of parapets.

e. Lift the footbridge over the trees on to the abutments (1 day).

f. Demobilise the crane and trestles (2 days).

g. Remove hardcore/upfill used for the temporary footbridge assembly and crane pad area. Reinstate excavated fill and reinstate finishes/landscaping to the private property as appropriate (10 days).

4. For the finishes:

a. Construct the stone masonry wall (1m height by 0.7m width) flanking the proposed south approach path to the footbridge – consisting of 3m^3 of in-situ concrete base and 18m^3 of stone masonry (10 days).

b. Reinstate the stone masonry wall (1m height by 0.7m width) along the N59 frontage of The Old Barracks– consisting of 4m^3 of in-situ concrete base and 30m^3 of stone masonry (10-15 days). The realigned boundary will accommodate the relocated entrance to The Old Barracks.

c. Realign the kerbs at the edge of Carrowmanagh Rd and N59 Clifden Rd, install surfacing to the relocated The Old Barracks entrance and new footpath on the north side of the N59 Clifden Rd, and provide drop kerb details at the entrances (approximately 90m length of kerbs). Relocate the existing gully adjacent to the proposed zebra crossing on Carrowmanagh Rd to suit the amended kerb alignment. Drainage pipe to be modified to suit (20 days total).

d. Construct the approach paths, which consist of 50mm thick limestone paviours (approximately 12m^3) and 30mm thick grout bed (approximately 7m^3) (20 days).

e. Install the railing on the east side of the southern path (26m length) (10 days).

f. Construct the zebra crossings with raised tables (11m3 of modular pre-fabricated units or road surfacing) (10 days).

g. Install road signs, lighting, ducting, feeder pillars etc. (5 days).

h. Install a double panelled gate (7m wide) in the masonry boundary wall at the south-west end of the grass amenity area on Carrowmanagh Park.

i. Undertake landscape planting (105 days). This includes planting of 39 no. standard sized trees on Carrowmanagh Park amenity area (see Figure 3-4) , and 23 no. standard sized trees adjacent to the proposed footbridge and hedging in The Old Barracks (see Figure 3-3).

Figure 3-3 - Proposed development Landscape Plan

Figure 3-4 - Carrowmanagh Park off site tree planting landscape plan

Completion of Works.

Once works are completed, the following activities will be undertaken:-

- Remove the site fencing and temporary lighting (10 days).
- Remove the site compound and reinstate to agricultural grassland as appropriate (15 days).
- General clean and tidy of the site (5 days).
- A snag survey will be undertaken and any remedial actions undertaken (5 days).

3.2.4 Materials to be Used

The following materials and components will be used: -

- Concrete
- Reinforcement steel
- Structural steel (coatings to be applied offsite)
- Stainless steel parapets.
- Bridge bearings (elastomeric)
- Light fittings and ancillary products required to install pedestrian/public lighting
- Footbridge deck planks (timber or glass reinforced polymer (GRP))
- Road signage

- HDPE replacement water main pipe
- uPVC replacement sewer pipe
- Structural backfill and upfill (crushed rock/gravel etc)

3.2.5 Traffic Management

The following temporary traffic management is envisaged – details are subject to confirmation:

- Traffic management will be needed on the N59 Clifden Road to narrow the carriageway and provide a working space for dismantling and reconstruction of the existing masonry wall frontage to the Old Barracks.
- Closure of the eastbound lane of the N59 Clifden Road will be needed along the frontage of the Old Barracks to enable HGV's to deliver/collect the crane, footbridge sections, components etc.
- Traffic management will be needed on Carrowmanagh Rd to narrow the carriageway and provide a working space for realigning the kerb and modifying the footway.

- Lane closures with stop/go lights and shuttle working will be needed on N59 Clifden Road to construct the proposed zebra crossing with raised table realign the kerb, road markings and lighting.
- Lane closures with stop/go lights and shuttle working will be needed on Carrowmanagh Road to construct the proposed zebra crossing with raised table and realign the kerb line. It is envisaged that 1-2 days will be sufficient.

A traffic management plan will be developed by the contractor.

All waste/material will be removed offsite by a hauler with a valid collection permit and the waste will be disposed / recycled in a licenced Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) facility.

3.2.6 Programme / Phasing

The following is an overview of the programme and phasing of the works (subject to receipt of planning and statutory consents):

- Site investigations: The expected duration is two weeks, and the expected start date is Q3 2026.

- Enabling & construction works: Expected duration is nine months from mobilisation to completion, and the expected start date is Q4 2026.

The duration that excavations will be left exposed will be minimised as far as reasonably practicable. Excavations will be scheduled so that subsequent works such as blinding, in-situ RC, or PC installation can follow on quickly. This is to minimise the potential for silt to be generated which mitigates the risk of silt laden surface water run-off into the river. Excavation works will be carried out during relatively dry weather to mitigate the risk of siltation runoff into the river. Weather forecast / rainfall will be monitored. Monitoring of the weather forecast and turbidity levels will be undertaken and trigger levels will be established to stop work.

The expected duration of significant disruption to adjacent homeowners and residential amenity areas is shown below.

The expected duration of significant disruption to the Old Barracks is approximately six weeks. During this period, the following will be undertaken:

- Install temporary crane pad & footbridge assembly area.
- Mobilise the crane to site.

- Assemble the delivered footbridge sections.
- Lift the footbridge into position.
- Demobilise the crane.

The expected duration of significant disruption to the house (Riverside) adjacent to the proposed north abutment is approx. 13 days. During this period, the existing boundary wall adjacent to the proposed north abutment will be dismantled, the watermains and combined sewer will be relocated/replaced, and the wall will be rebuilt in a realigned position.

The expected duration of disruption to the grass amenity area on Carrowmanagh Park is expected to be approx. 15 days during planting of the compensation trees.

3.2.7 Utilities

The following existing utilities are present at the site:

- North riverbank path adjacent to the proposed abutment and ramp:
  - 225mm diameter buried concrete combined sewer pipe (1.56m depth below ground level (bgl)).
  - 100 mm diameter buried watermain (1.00m depth bgl).
  - No overhead cables.
- Carrowmanagh Road adjacent to the proposed pedestrian crossing:
  - 225mm diameter buried concrete combined sewer pipe (1.56m depth bgl).
  - 100 mm diameter buried watermain (1.00m depth bgl).
  - Empty buried Aurora & Eir ducts / manholes.
  - Overhead electric cables.
- South riverbank and private land adjacent to the proposed abutment and approach path:
  - Buried pipe – combined sewer (4.00m depth, UTT QL B4).
- N59 Clifden Road at the proposed pedestrian crossing:
  - Buried water main (1.1m deep bgl).
  - Buried Eir telecoms (0.3 to 0.5m deep bgl).
  - Road gully and buried 225mm dia. PVC pipe (0.5 to 0.9m depth bgl).
  - Overhead electric cables.

3.2.8 Site Compound and Site Entrance

A site compound will be set up before commencement of the works (15 days). The site compound is a contractor designed element. For preliminary design purposes, the proposals assume that the site compound needs to accommodate a temporary set-down area for the prefabricated footbridge sections and a turning circle for heavy goods vehicles. On this basis, the required area of the site compound would be approximately 4500m^2, and approximately 1300m^3 of hardcore/gravel would be used to build up temporary access roads, paths and working area. The Contractor will design the site compound and may determine that a smaller area is sufficient.

The site compound will be located at least 50m away from the Owenriff River. It is envisaged that the site compound will be setup in a field along Station Road as shown in Figure 3-5, (Drg. No. 0088798-ATK-XX-XX-DR-CE-900014) which is approx. 300m south-west of the site. The proposed location is a field on Station Rd owned by Galway CC c. 300m south-west of the site for the proposed footbridge.

Materials and plant required for the works are anticipated to be stored in this compound. All storage areas shall be appropriately bunded where required. Fuelling of plant is anticipated to be in a designated fuelling area within the compound. The compound will provide for the following:

- Welfare/office facilities for site staff.
- Plant/machinery parking/storage area.
- Fuel storage/refuelling area.
- Segregated waste area.
- Construction staff parking.

The final proposed site compound location will be subject to client approval, and will be the responsibility of the appointed Contractor.

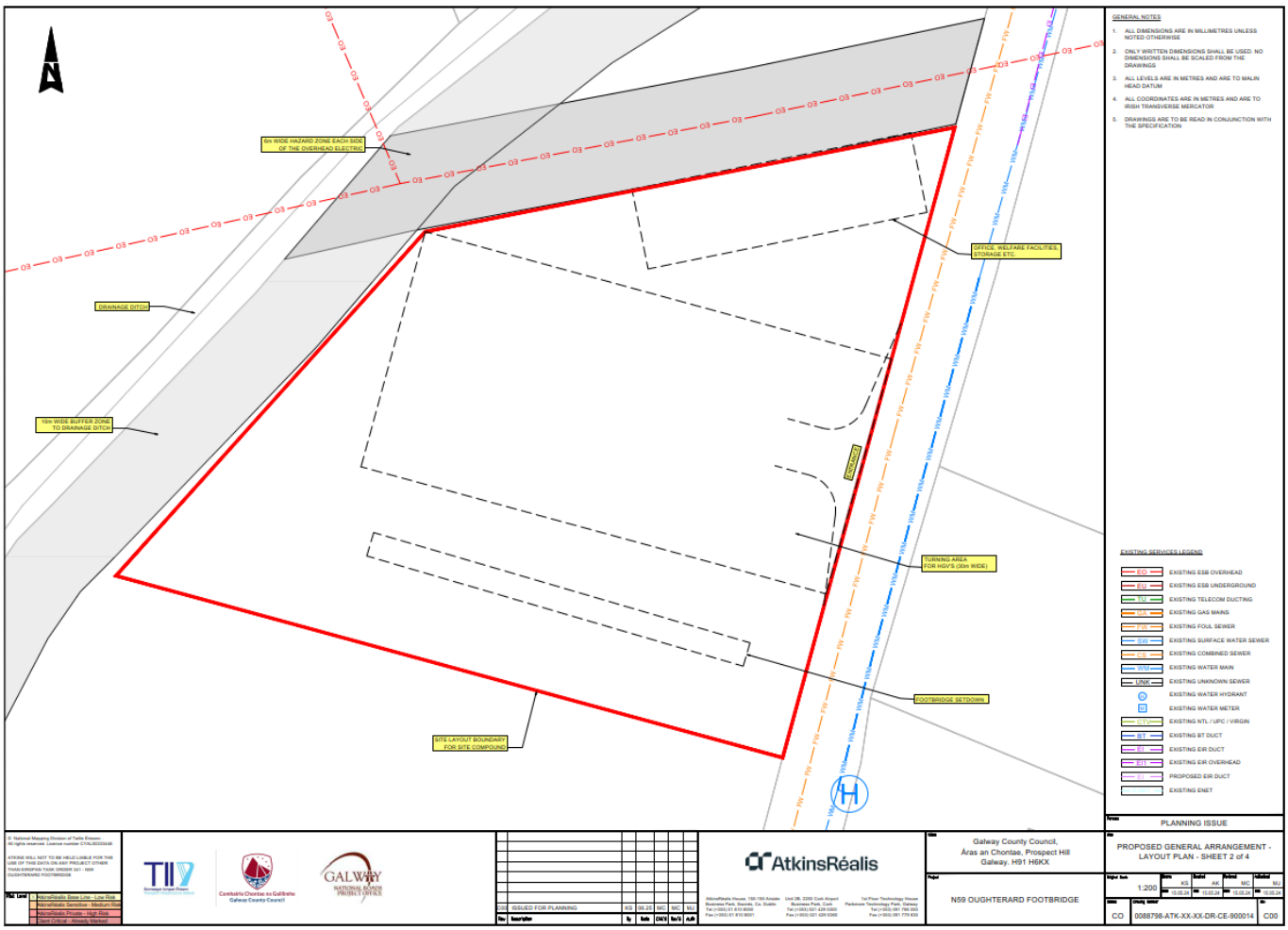

Figure 3-5 - Propsed site compound - indicated by red dotted line

4. EIA Screening Process

4.1 Desk-Based Studies

In undertaking this EIA Screening Assessment, AtkinsRéalis completed a detailed desk-based assessment using data from the following sources:

- Relevant guidance documents and legislation (listed in Section 4.3 below).
- Relevant published data from Government websites like the EPA's website (www.epa.ie), the Geological Survey of Ireland (www.gsi.ie), the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028.
- AtkinsRéalis Appropriate Assessment Screening (February, 2025).

4.2 Site Visits and Assessments

A site visit was carried out on 27th February, 24th June, 4th November, 19th December 2024 and 30th January 2005 by AtkinsRéalis Senior ecologist. Aquatic surveys were carried out by Pascal Sweeney of Sweeny Consultancy on the 3rd and 4th of July 2024. A bat survey was carried out by Dr. Caroline Shiel from June and August 2024. Tree surveys were carried out by Noel Lane – Tree care services in July 2024.

Ecological survey methods were in general accordance with those outlined in the following documents: -

- *A Guide to Habitats in Ireland* (Fossitt, 2000).
- *Best Practice Guidance for Habitat Survey and Mapping* (Smith *et al*., 2011).
- *Ecological Surveying Techniques for Protected Flora and Fauna during the Planning of National Road Schemes* (NRA, 2009).

Potential sensitive ecological receptors present within the survey area were recorded, including the presence of protected species and habitats or habitats that would support protected species, in addition to noting connectivity to European sites. Any presence of non-native invasive species was also recorded.

4.3 EIA Screening Legislation and Guidance

The Project Types listed in Annex I and Annex II of the 2011 EIA Directive were transposed into Irish Planning & Development legislation in Schedule 5 Parts 1 and Part 2, respectively. These regulations amend the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (S.I. No. 600 of 2001); they seek to transpose EIA Directive 2014/52/EU and to give further effect to the 2011 Directive, as follows;

- An EIAR is required as a matter of course on specified large-scale projects which have a high likelihood of impacting on the receiving environment. These projects are listed in full within the Planning & Development Regulations (2001-2025), Schedule 5, Part 1 – Development for the purposes of Part 10.
- Each EU Member State has discretionary consideration for the requirement of an EIA in relation to Class 2 Project Types. These projects are listed in full within the Planning & Development Regulations (2001-2025), Schedule 5, Part 2 – Development for the purposes of Part 10. If the proposed project is listed under Schedule 5, Part 2, but does not exceed the relevant stated thresholds, it is considered to be sub-threshold. Part 10, Article 92 of the Planning & Development Regulations, 2001 as amended states 'sub-threshold development' means 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". Any sub-threshold developments should be evaluated to determine if the project is likely to have a significant impact on the environment.

Criteria to evaluate whether significant impacts on the receiving environment will arise from a proposed development are listed under Schedule 7 of the relevant Planning & Development Regulations (2001-2025). A list of the relevant information to be provided by the applicant or developer for the purposes of sub-threshold EIA screening is presented in Schedule 7A of the Regulations and summarised below.

1. A description of the proposed development, including in particular:

- a description of the physical characteristics of the whole proposed development and, where relevant, of demolition works; and,
- a description of the location of the proposed development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected.

2. A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development.

3. A description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, of the proposed development on the environment resulting from:

- the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant; and,
- the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity.

The compilation of the information at paragraphs 1 to 3 shall take into account, where relevant, the criteria set out in Schedule 7.

Accordingly, the proposed development has been screened in accordance with:

- Section 3.2 of the 'Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (EPA, 2022);
- European Commission (2017), Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects, Guidance on Screening;
- Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2003), Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-Threshold Developments;
- ORP Practice Note PN02 Environment Impact Assessment Screening (2021);
- Environmental Impact Directive (85/337/EEC) and all subsequent relevant amendments;
- Planning and Development Regulations (2001-2024); and,
- Roads Act, 1993-2021 and the European Union (Roads Act 1993) (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulation 2019 (S.I. No. 279 of 2019).

Figure 4-1 provides a summary of the main steps involved in the EIA screening process.

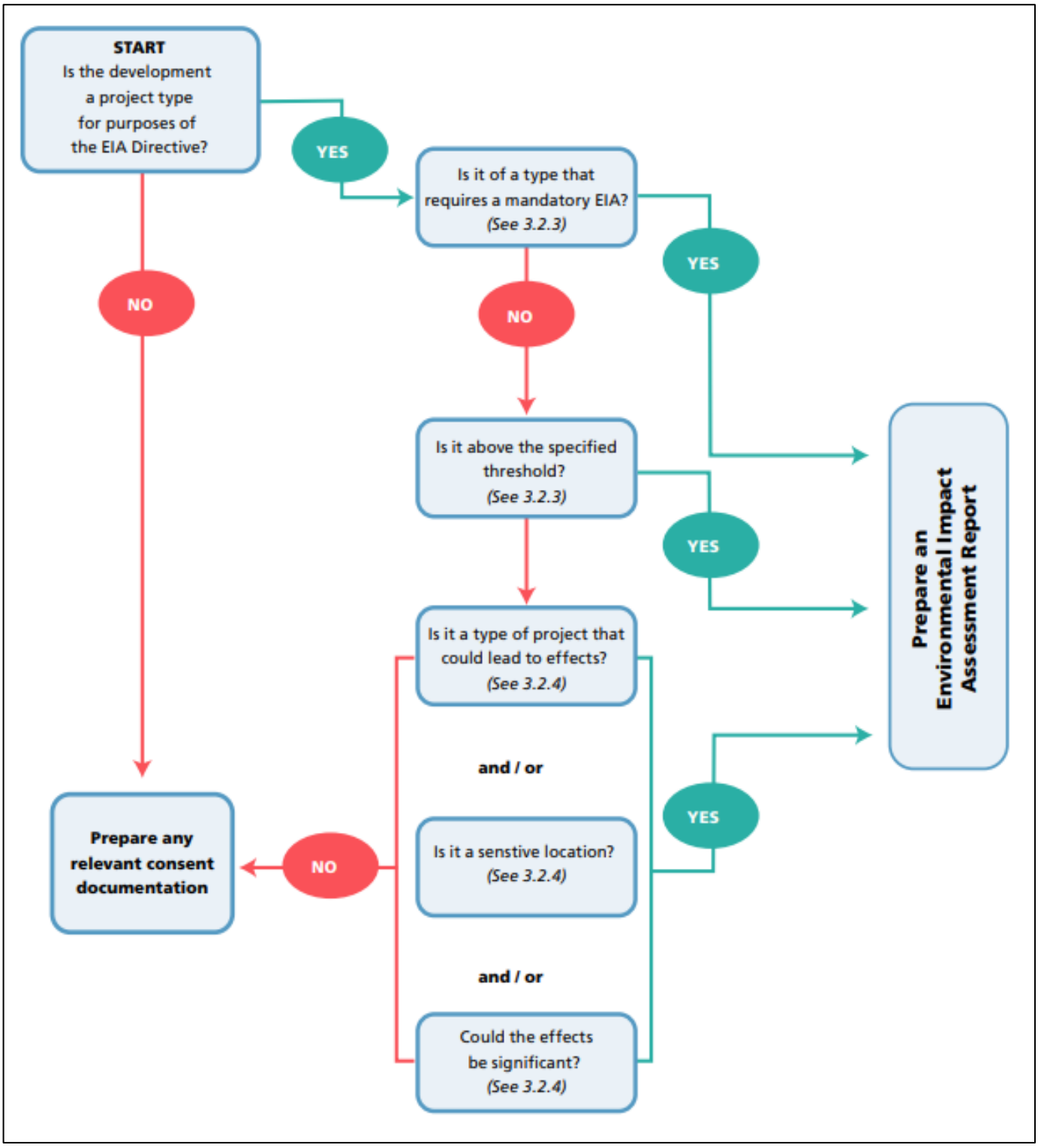

Figure 4-1 - EIA Screening Process (Source: 'Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports' (EPA, 2022)).

4.4 The Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended - Screening

The 2011 EU EIA Directive differentiates between those projects that automatically requires an environmental impact assessment (listed as Annex 1 projects) and those which may require an assessment if they are likely to have significant environmental effects (Annex II projects). These project types have been transposed into Irish legislation under Parts 1 and 2 respectively of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

The proposed development was screened using the following criteria:

- If the project is of a type listed in Schedule 5, Part 1; or,
- If not, whether:
  - it is listed in Schedule 5, Part 2;
  - it meets any of the relevant thresholds and criteria set out in Schedule 5, Part 2;
  - any part of it is located within sensitive area; or
  - it would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

4.4.1 Part 1 Type Projects

The project has been screened against the list of Project Types which have a high likelihood of impacting on the receiving environment and therefore require a mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment, under Schedule 5 Part 1 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2024.

This project does not fall within any category of development requiring a mandatory EIA; hence the preparation of an EIAR is not required under Schedule 5 Part 1.

4.4.2 Part 2 Type Projects

The project has been screened against the types of development, various processes and activities listed in Schedule 5 Part 2 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2025. The proposed development may fall within the following categories which provide that an EIA must be completed – subject to specified thresholds being met or exceeded.

10. Infrastructure projects

(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.

13. Changes, extensions, development and testing

(a)

Any change or extension of development already authorised, executed or in the process of being executed (not being a change or extension referred to in part 1) which would: -

(i) result in the development being of a class listed in part 1 or paragraphs 1 to 12 of Part 2 of this Schedule, and

(ii) result in an increase in size greater than:

- 25 per cent, or

- an amount equal to 50 per cent of the appropriate threshold, whichever is the greater.

(In this paragraph, an increase in size is calculated in terms of the unit of measure of the appropriate threshold.)

15. Any project listed in this Part which does not exceed a quantity, area or other limit specified in this Part in respect of the relevant class of development, but which would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7.

4.4.2.1 Class 10 - Infrastructure Projects

The proposed development site is 0.25 hectares in size and is not located within a business district. The contractors compound will occupy 0.45ha and the landscaping in Carrowmanagh Park will cover 0.14ha. This is a total of 0.84ha. The proposed development is below the other relevant thresholds (i.e. 10 hectares in the case of other parts of a built-up area and 20 hectares elsewhere).

Therefore, it could be considered that the proposed development may not fall under Schedule 5 Part 2 (10) (b) (ii) of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended.

4.4.2.2 Class 13 – Changes, extensions, development and testing

This is a new development.

Therefore, it could be considered that the proposed development may not fall under Schedule 5 Part 2 (13) (a)(i) and (ii) of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended.

4.4.2.3 Class 15 - Sub-threshold Development Likely to Have significant Effects on the Environment

It could be considered that the proposed development has the potential to have a significant effect on the environment. Therefore, an EIA screening to assess whether the project would be likely to have significant effects on the environment (having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7) is required for this project in accordance with Section 15 of Schedule 5 Part 2 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended.

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5. Environmental Impact Assessment Screening

5.1 Determining if the project is likely to have significant effect on the receiving environment

All relevant information as required under Schedule 7 and 7A has been provided on behalf of Galway County Council and is presented within this screening report. The potential for this project to pose a significant effect to the receiving environment has also been evaluated in accordance with criteria listed in the Planning & Development Regulations, 2001-2025 (Schedule 7), as presented in the tables below.

5.1.1 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

Table 5-1 below details the development characteristics criteria, as required under Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended.

Table 5-1 - Characteristics of the Proposed Development

Screening Criteria	Proposed Development
Size and design of the project	
Will the size and design of the whole project be considered significant?	No. The site area for the footbridge including approaches, tree planting and temporary works is ca. 0.25ha and the scale and nature are not considered significant within the urban setting. The site compound will occupy 0.45ha and Carrowmanagh Park tree planting 0.14Ha.
Cumulation with other projects	
Will other existing project and/ or approved project be able to affect the project.	A search of the Galway County Council Planning Applications, An Bord Pleanála planning portal, Uisce Éireann and Transport Infrastructure Ireland project portals has been undertaken for the applications submitted within the past 5 years in the vicinity of the site (last reviewed 17/02/2025). Some of the granted applications have already been completed and of those which are not completed, most are generally small scale in nature (i.e., residential extension works, or property improvement works). Completed or granted applications of such small scale (such as residential improvements) have not been considered further in terms of potential for cumulative impacts. For the purposes of this study, only significant new developments that are likely to generate a significant number of trips and developments that may encroach nearby to the existing development have been considered, as follows: ▪ 21466 - Four two storey detached dwelling houses and all associated works and ancillary services. Gross floor space of proposed works 576sqm. ▪ 2460190 - For the development consisting of the following: demolition of existing dwelling and shed; construction of 5no. terraced dwellings; associated bin and bike store; alterations to the existing front boundary wall and gates; and connection to existing services together with all ancillary site development works. A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) has

	been prepared as part of this application. Gross floor space of proposed works: 506.50 sqm. Gross floor space of any demolition: 186.10 sqm. ▪ 201298 **/** ABP-310043-21 - For residential development consisting of the provision of a total of 22 no. Dwellings as follows - 11 no. 2 bed two storey units, 8 no. 3 bed two storey units & 3 no. 4 bed two storey units. Permission also to include for associated car parking, site signage, removal of the existing unused tanks, connection to existing services and all associated site works. Gross floor space of proposed works: 2122 sqm. ▪ 2460466 - for the development consisting of the following: 1. Construction of a commercial building (3 Storey). 2. Construction of 2 no. (2 ½ storey) duplex buildings to provide for 7 no. ground floor commercial start up units and 8 no. 2 bed upper floor apartments. 3. Construction of 35 no. houses consisting of: a. 10 no. 4 bedroom 2 storey semi-detached houses, b. 1 no. 4 bedroom 2 ½ storey end of terrace house, c. 14 no. 3 bedroom 2 storey semi-detached houses, d. 2 no. 3 bedroom 2 storey end/mid terra
Nature of any associated demolition works	
Will the construction of the project include any significant demolition works.	There will be no significant demolition works required for the proposed development. Part of the project will require the dismantling of the existing masonry boundary wall adjacent to the proposed structure on the north side of the river. Similarly dismantling of the existing masonry wall along the frontage of the dwelling on the south side (The Old Barracks). These will be reinstated post footbridge placement.
Use of natural resources	
Will construction or operation of the project use natural resources above or below ground which are non-renewable or in short supply?	The use of natural resources will be kept to a minimum; aggregates and soil will be re-used on site, where possible and if required. Vegetation clearance be required (removal of 60no. trees) along the proposed development, and it will take place outside of the nesting season (February – August). If this is not possible, an ecologist will survey the vegetation for breeding birds no longer than 24 hours prior to clearance. If nesting birds are identified, then an alternative approach to the work will be used.
Production of waste	
Will the project produce wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Construction waste will be kept to a minimum with only contaminated waste being removed off site. The following waste streams will be produced during the construction: ▪ Generic construction waste that may be generated during the construction of the footbridge. The waste will be separated into dedicated labelled skips and sent for recycling/disposal. ▪ Trees: the removal of 60no. trees several of which have ash die back. Trees exhibiting ash die back will be disposed of separately. ▪ Excavation waste: Excavation for the placement of the crane pad, the abutment foundations etc. will generate clean soil and stone material. The contractor will be required to re-use/re-purpose as much of this material as possible within the site. All soil requiring disposal offsite will require waste classification in accordance with EPA requirements as set out in the documents 'Waste

	Classification List of Waste & Determining if Waste is Hazardous or Non-hazardous' (EPA, 2015), and 'Determining if waste is hazardous or non-hazardous' (EPA, 2018), and all relevant waste management legislation. In addition to screening against relevant WAC, the preparation of a waste classification tool (Hazwaste online / EPA paper tool or similar etc.) will be required to be carried out in order to determine the relevant LoW / EWC code for the transport of any waste soils which require offsite removal and disposal. Expected wastes that will be removed from the site will be made-ground, soil and stone, and concrete.
Pollution and nuisances	
Will the project release any pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?	The current baseline air quality index in the area is 'Good' for Zone D: Rural Ireland. It is noted that the information from monitoring instruments at representative locations in the location may not reflect local incidents of air pollution. The closest monitoring station to the proposed development is Rahoon (Station Code GA03) located ca. 23km south-west of the site in sub-urban Galway. Dust will be the main potential air pollutant arising from the construction of the proposed development. Management of dust will be in line with relevant best practice measures such as those set out in 'Guidelines for the Treatment of Air Quality During the Planning and Construction of National Road Schemes' (NRA, 2011). On site dust management will form part of the CEMP for the site. Due to the nature and scale of the project detailed in Section 3, it is anticipated that the construction works, and operation of the proposed development will not have a significant effect on air quality.
Will the project cause:	
Noise and vibration.	Noise levels will not exceed the indicative levels of acceptability for construction noise in an urban environment as set out in the NRA guidance 'Good Practice Guidance for the Treatment of Noise during the Planning of National Road Schemes' (NRA, 2014). The construction phases will have noise barriers in place as required, to minimise / eliminate noise disturbances to sensitive receptors i.e., residential units located adjacent to the site while construction is taking place. Works will be scheduled during day-time hours. Construction contractors will be required to comply with the requirements of the European Communities (Construction Plant and Equipment) (Permissible Noise Levels) Regulations, 1988 as amended in 1990 and 1996 (S.I. No. 320 of 1988, S.I. No. 297 of 1990 and S.I. No. 359 of 1996), and the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Control of Noise at Work) Regulations, 2006 (S.I. No. 371 of 2006). Due to the nature and scale of the project, detailed in Section 3 it is anticipated that the construction works, and operation of the proposed development will not have a significant effect with regards to noise. Rotary piles, if used, will be small diameter and approximately 30m from the edge of the river. Vibration monitoring will be implemented with trigger levels to ensure that vibration effects on sensitive receptors are within acceptable levels.
Release of light.	Lighting will be provided on the parapets of the proposed footbridge & north ramp, and on the masonry wall along the south approach path. It is envisaged that directional downlighting will be used to avoid light trespass into the environment. Low energy LED lighting will be used to illuminate areas.

Heat.	The development will not cause release of heat.
Energy.	The development will not cause release of energy.
Electromagnetic radiation.	The development will not cause release of electromagnetic radiation.
Will the project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants, including leachate, onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or sea?	The potential for accidents or incidents causing oil and chemical spillages are limited. Oil storage will be limited to the Contractors Compound which is remotely located from the river. All operations will be in accordance with Guidance on Assessment and Construction Management in *Margaritifera* Catchments in Irelands (Atkinson et al, 2023). With the adoption of site-specific risk management and remediation measures, as appropriate, during construction, no adverse impacts will arise and the residual effects on sensitive receptors would not be significant. An Ecological Clerk of Works will be appointed by Galway County Council to supervise proposed works. A combination of silt mats, fences and wattles will be implemented to prevent any silt from entering the watercourse. Excavation works for the placement of services and platform for the crane, will be monitored and in the event that contaminated materials are encountered these will be segregated from uncontaminated soils, temporarily stored (any stockpiles will be lined and covered by heavy duty 1000-gauge plastic), sampled and analysed for relevant parameters (Waste Acceptance Criteria suite e.g., Rilta Disposal Suite). Any contaminated soils will be characterised as per the requirements of the relevant Waste Acceptance Criteria (WAC) under the relevant European Communities Council Decision (EC) (92003/33/EC). The waste material will be classified in accordance with the requirements of the EPA as set out in the following documents 'Waste Classification List of Waste & Determining if Waste is Hazardous or Non-hazardous' (EPA, 2018). Any contaminated soils will be transported by appropriately permitted hauliers and disposed of to an appropriate EPA licensed Waste Facility in accordance with all relevant waste management legislation. Waste disposal records will be maintained by the Contractor.
Risk of major accidents and/or disasters relevant to the project concerned	
Will there be any risk of major accidents (including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge) during construction, operation or decommissioning?	Ireland in general is at low risk of natural disasters: earthquakes are rare and of low magnitude, there are no active volcanos, and severe weather events are rarely experienced. Flooding is experienced throughout Ireland on a regular basis. The site has been assessed in accordance with the "The Planning System and Flood Risk Management" Guidelines. As part of the sequential test, the OPW flood hazard maps have been consulted, as have the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment Maps produced by the OPW. The OPW (2025) CFRAM River Flood maps indicate Low, Medium and High probability of flooding on the Owenriff River. According to the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028, the Owenriff River is within Flood Zone A and the surrounding lands are within Flood Zone C2. There are 6no. past flood events within 3km of the N59 Oughterard Bridge, 3no. of which are recurrent. An OPW Section 50 report was completed by SLR Environmental Consulting (Ireland) Ltd (November 2024) and approved by the OPW. This report

[2] https://consult.galway.ie/ga/system/files/materials/17/G19014%20Oughterard%20FRM%2020210514.pdf

	concluded that '*the soffit level of the proposed bridge is at least 772mm above the peak 1% AEP MRFS flood event in the river. This is in accordance with the OPW requirements which sets the freeboard being at least 300mm above the flood level. The proposed pedestrian bridge will be outside of the 1% AEP MRFS flood extent. Therefore, it won't have an effect on the flood levels in the river'.* The appointed contractor will have an emergency plan in place in the event of any major accidents. This will be approved by Galway County Council prior to works commencing. Major accidents affecting the development include generic risk of fire or explosion. All these events will be covered by a risk assessments and contingency plans which apply to the proposed development. The chosen contractor will be required to liaise with Galway County Council and familiarise themselves with Galway County Council's emergency procedures. In the event of accidents or fire, measures will be in place to limit emissions to land, water and air, as far as practicable. With these arrangements in place the impact of emissions on human health and sensitive receptors in general will be mitigated such that adverse impacts will be unlikely to arise in the event of an accident.
Is the location susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, or extreme /adverse climatic conditions, e.g., temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the project to present environmental problems?	The location is not susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, or extreme/adverse climatic conditions.
The risks to human health	
Will the project present a risk to the population (having regard to population density) and their human health during construction, operation or decommissioning? (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution)	Construction will be undertaken in accordance with the commitments to be set out in a site-specific CEMP prepared by the appointed Contractor, such that no significant construction effects on construction workers, residents and the environment will arise. The Contractor will also comply with Galway County Council's Emergency Procedures and Plans. Given the nature of the proposed development, impacts on population during operation, from water contamination, noise and vibration or air quality and climate are not anticipated to be significant.

5.1.2 Location of the Development

Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended, requires a description of the location of the proposed development, with regards to the environmental sensitivity of the geographical area likely to be affected by the project. Table 5-2 below details the criteria considered and provides an assessment relating to same.

Table 5-2 - Location of the Proposed Development

Screening Criteria	Proposed Development
Existing and approved land use	
Are there existing or approved land uses or community facilities on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	Under the Galway County Council Development Plan 2022-2028, the following zoning objective has been identified within the footprint of the proposed development: ▪ TI - Transport Infrastructure; ▪ Water/Rivers/Streams; ▪ OS - Open Space / Recreation & Amenity; and, ▪ C1 – Town Centre. It is considered that the proposed development is compatible with the zoning requirements of the development strategy for the area, under the Galway County Council Development Plan 2022-2028, providing for transport infrastructure within a small town. The existing N59 road bridge, ca. 150m west of the proposed development forms part of the Galway Clifden Scenic Route and the Lough Corrib Scenic Route. The contractor will inform and work with all stakeholders to address concerns. Control measures to avoid/mitigate impacts will be included in the CEMP. The Contractor will develop and implement a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) for the construction stage. No existing, approved land uses for health, education, or community facilities in general, on, or around, the location will be affected by the proposed development. There is a residential property located along the north ramp of the proposed development. The construction, operation or decommissioning of the proposed development will not involve actions which will cause significant physical changes in the topography of the area.
The relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground	
Are there any areas on or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources which could be affected by the project?	The Owenriff River is important as a Salmonid river and the presence of a significant population of Freshwater Pearl Mussel, a species listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive and protected under the Wildlife Acts 1976-2021 (as amended). The Owenriff River is one of the most densely populated *Margaritifera* rivers in the world. It is recommended that the Owenriff Catchment should be one of the most protected catchments in the country for *Margaritifera*,

Absorption capacity of the natural environment	
Are there any other areas on or around the location which has the potential to impact on the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths?	A Natura Impact Statement (AtkinsRéalis, 2025) prepared for the proposed development states that '*In conclusion, given the full and proper implementation of the mitigation prescribed in this NIS, there is no reasonable scientific doubt remaining as to the absence of adverse effects on Lough Corrib SAC, or any other Natura 2000 site, in view of their conservation objectives'.*
Has the project the potential to impact on the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to coastal zones and the marine environment?	The proposed development is located ca. 20km from the coast at their closest location. Due to the proximity to the coast, it is not anticipated that the proposed development will have a significant impact on the coastal zone or marine environment. The proposed development is located ca. 20km from the coast. It is considered that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on the coastal or marine environment.
Has the project the potential to impact on the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to mountain and forest areas?	There is a block of mature deciduous trees to the east of the Old Barracks house. The trees are along the southern river bank and extend to the rear of the houses on the N59 road. Species are mainly ash, sycamore, alder and beech. Many of the ash trees are showing signs of ash die-back disease. Another woodland area is located to the rear of Kennys Derelict pub on main street and extends north to the Owenriff River. The trees in this area consist of ash (again with ash die-back, sycamore and beech). There is a lot of Japanese knotweed and Himalayan knotweed growing in this open area between the Old Barrack portion of trees and these trees.
Has the project the potential to impact on the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to areas classified or protected under national legislation; Natura 2000 areas designated by Member States pursuant to Directive 92/43/EEC and Directive 2009/147/EC?	A Natura Impact Statement (AtkinsRéalis, 2025) prepared for the proposed development states that '*In conclusion, given the full and proper implementation of the mitigation prescribed in this NIS, there is no reasonable scientific doubt remaining as to the absence of adverse effects on Lough Corrib SAC, or any other Natura 2000 site, in view of their conservation objectives'.* Based on the location of the proposed development, there is no potential for impact on the absorption capacity of the natural environment.
Has the project the potential to impact on the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards, laid down in Union legislation and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure?	The absorption capacity of the natural environment is characterised as follows: The area around the proposed development is urban in nature. Based on the nature, scale and location of the proposed development as detailed in Section 3, there is no potential for impact on the absorption capacity of the natural environment. The proposed development is located within the Corrib Water Framework Directive (WFD) Catchment area and BallycuirkeLoughStream_SC_010 sub-catchment. There is

	1no. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) watercourse within the site of the proposed development; the Owenriff River (IE_WE_30O020200) which is directly crossed by the development. There is 1no. watercourse within the vicinity of the site - the CANRAWER_EAST stream which flows in an easterly direction into the Owenriff River and is located ca. 110m from the proposed development. Contamination of this watercourses via. siltation or hydrocarbon spillages, is a risk during the construction phase, however, best practice measures will be employed through adherence to the CEMP which will be prepared, and accidental spills and silt generation will be dealt with through prescribed spill response and silt collection measures. Leaching of pollutants to groundwater is a risk during the construction phase, however, best practice measures will be employed through adherence to the CEMP which will be prepared, and accidental spills will be dealt with through prescribed spill response measures.
Has the project the potential to impact on the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to densely populated areas?	No. There is no significant effect on the absorption capacity of the natural environment in relation to densely populated areas as a result of the proposed development.
Has the project the potential to impact on the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or Archaeological significance?	No. The existing Oughterard Bridge is a NIAH feature (30326008) which is within ca. 150m of the proposed development, but the proposed development will not affect this bridge. There is no potential for impact on the absorption capacity of the natural environment in relation to landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or Archaeological significance.

5.1.3 Characteristics of Potential Impact

Table 5-3 below details the types and characteristics of potential impacts of the proposed development as required under Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended.

Table 5-3 - Characteristics of the Proposed Development

Screening Criteria	Proposed Development
The magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	
Outline the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example, geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).	The spatial extent of the proposed development including the contractors compound and the proposed landscaping is 0.84ha.Site investigations are anticipated to last 2 weeks and are expected to commence Q3 2026. The expected duration of the construction works is approximately nine months with an expected start date in Q4 2026. Direct impacts associated with the proposed works are likely to be located within the environs of the site, chiefly associated with impacts on the nearby residence, pedestrians and vehicular movement within the local area. Traffic management will be implemented during construction to minimise disruption to traffic flow. Due to the nature of the proposed works it is likely that the resident population would potentially be affected by the development.
Nature of the impact	
Outline the nature of the impact.	The nature of the impacts arising from the proposed development may effect humans and the environment. There could be potential adverse construction impacts arising from temporary disruption or disturbance associated with the proposed works. This has potential to result in construction traffic, noise, vibration and air quality impacts but with the implementation of the control measures included in the CEMP it is unlikely that impacts would give rise to significant environmental effects. There could be potential effects on the water quality and the species it supports (salmon and freshwater pearl mussel) in the Owenriff River. The implementation of the site specific CEMP and risk assessments for stages of the work close to the river will mitigate any potential effects that may arise. The removal of 60no. trees will have an effect on species of birds and bats that may use these trees. Although a tree survey conducted at the site found that many of the species of ash tree where effected by ash die-back. The loss of trees will be sufficiently compensated by the proposed landscaping/tree planting at Carrowanagh Park. Potential adverse operational impacts of the development will be associated with increased footfall and lighting on the bridge.
Transboundary nature of the impact	
Is the project likely to lead to transboundary effects?	Given the location of the site no transboundary impacts will occur.
The intensity and complexity of the impact	
Outline the intensity and complexity of the impact.	The impacts identified are unlikely to cause significant changes in environmental conditions within the site and surrounding area.

The probability of the impact	
Outline the probability of the impact.	During construction, conventional construction and best environmental practice techniques can be readily deployed. In order to minimise disruption, a CEMP will be implemented. There is no significant environmental impact during the operational phase anticipated, the proposed development will have an overall positive impact as it will provide active travel opportunities for the local population.
The expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact	
Outline the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact.	It is expected that the duration of construction works will be approximately nine months. Normal working hours during the construction period are expected to be Monday to Friday 08:00 to 18:00, and Saturday 09:00 to 13:00. During the construction stage it may be necessary to carry out some work outside of normal working hours however, this will be kept to a minimum and only undertaken following approval from Galway County Council. The noise and air quality impact peaks during construction will be intermittent with a potential background level of nuisance as they will depend on the construction activities which are for their nature variable and not continuous. Noise levels will increase above ambient levels at different stages of the enabling works and construction. Noise generated during the tree removal will be short-term and noise generated during placement of the crane and footbridge will be short-term. It is not expected that noise levels will be significant during the operational stage. The selection and implementation of established best practice procedures as set out by the appointed Contractor will ensure potential environmental impacts during the construction phase are offset.
Cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved development	
Could this project together with existing and/ or approved project result in cumulation of impacts together during construction/ operation phase?	As discussed previously, there are no approved developments in the vicinity with which cumulative impacts could arise.
Possibility of effectively reducing the impact	
What measures can be adopted to avoid, reduce, repair or compensate the impact?	The design of the proposed development is being developed to reduce both construction and operational impacts. During construction the impact of the proposed works would be further reduced through the implementation of the CEMP. During operation, potential impacts would be reduced by the inclusion of design measures, operational control plans including Galway County Council guidance and standards.

5.1.4 Schedule 7A

Table 5-4 below signposts the location of information for screening.

Table 5-4 - Information for Screening

1. A description of the proposed development, including:	
(a) A description of the physical characteristics of the whole proposed development and, where relevant, of demolition works.	Refer to Table 5-1 and Section 3 of this report.
(b) A description of the location of the proposed development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of the geographical areas likely to be affected.	Refer to Table 5-2 and Section 4 of this report.
2. A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development.	Refer to Table 5-3.
3. A description of the 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,	Refer to Table 5-1 – Production of Waste.
(b) the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity	Refer to Table 5-1 – soil, land, water and biodiversity.
4. The compilation of the information at paragraphs 1 to 4 shall take account, where relevant, the criteria set out in Schedule 7.	

6. Potential for Significant Effects on the Receiving Environment

All relevant information as required under Schedule 7A has been provided on behalf of the client and is presented within Section 5 of this screening report. The potential for this project to pose a significant impact to the receiving environment has also been evaluated in accordance with criteria listed Planning and Development Regulations (2001-2025) (Schedule 7), as presented within Section 3.4 of this screening report.

It is considered that due to the size, nature, and characteristics of the proposed development, no significant effects on the receiving environment are expected; hence the preparation of a sub-threshold EIAR is not required.

7. Screening Conclusion

This EIA screening report has been carried out in accordance with the Planning and Development Regulations as amended 2001- 2025 (which give effect to the provisions of EU Directive 2014/52/EU). The report assessed the impact of the proposed development in conjunction with committed developments in the surrounding area.

Based on all available information, and taking account of the scale, nature and location of the proposed development it is our opinion that the preparation of an EIAR is not a mandatory requirement (under Schedule 5, Part 1 and 2 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 - 2025). The project is deemed a sub-threshold development; hence the potential for significant environmental effects arising as a result of the proposed development has been evaluated, in accordance with the requirements of Schedule 7A and Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Acts 2001-2025.

Key findings are summarised as follows;

- Due to the limited nature of the works, it is considered that there will be no significant cumulative impacts with other developments in the general area;
- Limited noise, vibration and dust emissions may be generated during construction; however, this is anticipated to be minimal in effect and will cause no significant impacts;
- There will be no significant impact on biodiversity, groundwater, surface water or traffic; and,
- There will be no significant impacts on recorded monuments or historic features.

In summary, no significant adverse impacts to the receiving environment will arise as a result of the proposed development.

Accordingly, we consider that the preparation of an EIAR is not required for the proposed development. However, the competent authority will ultimately determine whether an EIA is required or not.

8. References

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