



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report

ACP-323207-25

Development	Construction of two schools and all associated site works.
Location	Baker Hall, Limekilnhill, Navan, Co. Meath
Planning Authority	Meath County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	2460509
Applicant(s)	Louth and Meath Educational and Training Board
Type of Application	Permission
Planning Authority Decision	Grant Permission
Type of Appeal	Third Party
Appellant	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Concerned Residents of Woodlands Housing Estate2. Helen O'Neill
Date of Site Inspection	31 st October 2025
Inspector	Paul O'Brien

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The subject site, with a stated area of 3.3 hectares, contains an irregular shaped area of land located to the west/ north west of the Baker Hall Road and to the east/ south of the Woodlands housing estate, approximately 675m to the south of Navan Market Square. Baker Hall Road provides access to the Baker Hall residential development from Academy Street, a street which diverges from and runs parallel to the Dublin Road. The primary access to the Woodland residential development is from the R161/ Trim Road, west and approximately 376m to the west of the subject site.
- 1.2. The Boyne River is approximately 135m east of the eastern boundary of the site, though does not adjoin the site due to roads and existing development. The site slopes upwards from east to west and levels out towards the western part of the site. The Baker Hall Road climbs steeply from Academy Street and at a different gradient to the subject site. The subject lands were under grass and undeveloped on the day of the site visit though a recently constructed construction access point was visible.
- 1.3. The subject site adjoins a mix of established and newly constructed residential development, the newer units are located to the south/ south east in the Baker Hall development.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. The development consists of the construction of two schools as follows:
 - A split-level building – part single-storey/ part three-storey school for Árd Rí Community National consisting of classrooms, physical education (PE) hall, ancillary rooms, storage space, library, administration rooms and all associated ancillary accommodation. The given floor area is 3,591sq m. This school has an L shaped footprint and is located to the northern part of the site.
 - A two storey building – for St. Ultan’s Special School consisting of classrooms, physical education (PE) hall, special education needs suite, ancillary rooms, storage space, library, administration rooms and all associated ancillary accommodation. The given floor area is 4,359.20sq m. This school has a T shaped footprint and is located to the southern part of the site.

- Car and bicycle parking for both schools.
- Shared sports facilities, playing areas and open space/ landscaping.
- Vehicular/ pedestrian connection to Baker Hall.
- Pedestrian connections to the north and west of the site.
- All associated site works.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

The Planning Authority decided to grant permission for this development, subject to conditions, following the receipt of a response to a further information request.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. Planning Reports

- The Planning Authority recommended that permission be granted subject to conditions. Further information was sought in relation to a number of issues and which included the need for a revised Preliminary Construction Management Plan, details to be provided of a revised site layout plan which includes access for emergency vehicles from St. Columbus Crescent in the event that Academy Street is flooded, details to be provided of a revised surface water drainage system, details to be provided of school drop-off/ pick up including times, details to be provided of a revised lighting design, provision of a noise impact assessment and the applicant was invited to make a response to the third party submissions. On receipt of the further information response, conditions were recommended in the event that permission were to be granted.

3.2.2. Other Technical Reports

- Transportation Department: Further information was requested in relation to the site entrance, proposed junction arrangements, proposed cycle/ footpaths and provision of suitable accessible car parking spaces, as well as standard car/ bicycle parking to be demonstrated. A second report was issued on the received

further information and a grant of permission, subject to conditions, was recommended.

- Environment Department – Flooding: Further information was sought in relation to the provision of an emergency access route for use during times of flood events and also details requested on the provision of suitable SUDs measures on site. A second report was issued on the received further information and a grant of permission, subject to conditions, was recommended.
- Transportation Department – Lighting: Further information requested to include the provision of a suitable lighting design that demonstrates the level of light spill outside of the site. No report was issued following the receipt of the further information response.
- Housing: No objection.

3.2.3. Conditions

The Planning Authority conditions are generally standard for a development of this nature, though I note the following:

- Condition no. 5 which seeks the provision of a revised site layout plan that provides full details on a trafficable access route for emergency vehicles to use St. Columbus Crescent. The reason for this condition provides the need, which is 'emergency access to schools during flood events'.
- Condition no. 6 requires details on the road junction with the Baker Hall access road, details on boundary treatments and details on car parking to be provided for the written agreement of the PA. Also, under Condition 6. (c) was a requirement for full details that demonstrate the provision of a 4m wide concrete footpath to connect an existing footpath in St. Columbus Crescent to 'The Close' in Baker Hall, and a 3m wide footpath from the western side of the development site to connect to the Woodlands estate.
- Condition no. 7 requires the implementation of the measures specified in the submitted Mobility and Management Plan.

- Condition no. 8 requires demonstration as to how the intended use of the facilities on site will be available for the wider community in accordance with SOC POL 19 of the Meath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027.
- Condition no. 12 requires archaeological monitoring of the site.
- Condition no. 13. Specifies noise limits during construction activity on site.

3.3. **Prescribed Bodies**

HSE – National Environmental Health Service: Further information requested in relation to the need for consultation about food hygiene requirements that would be required in this development. On receipt of the further information response, no further issues were raised.

3.4. **Third Party Observations**

A total of 44 submissions were received on the original application by the Planning Authority, and a single submission was received following the receipt of further information. The following points were made, summarised under relevant headings:

Traffic:

- The proposed development would give rise to increased traffic in the area.
- Concern about potential safety issues due to the existing road junctions and the volume of school going children that will be in the area.
- There is a noticeable reduction in traffic during periods of school holidays.
- There is a shortfall in public transport in the area, and the schools will be very dependent on cars to transport pupils to/ from the schools.

Access to the site from adjoining lands:

- Concern about the provision of an access from Woodlands to this site. This may lead to traffic congestion, anti-social behaviour and nuisance to existing residents.
- Due to existing anti-social behaviour, security fencing was installed in the area to combat this issue.
- The development will give rise to increased footfall through Woodlands.
- Concern about access to the school during times of winter weather when ice/snow may make access difficult to achieve along the roads with inclines.

- Uncertain if the applicant has legal right to build a link through the boundary.

Parking:

- Concern about parking/ set down in Woodlands, to access the proposed entrance to the school sites.

Over provision of schools in the one area:

- It was stated that there was an overprovision of schools in this one area of Navan.
- It is accepted that there is a need for new schools in the area but not with an entrance from an existing housing estate.

Impact on residential amenity:

- The proposed three storey units will give rise to overlooking of bungalows and other houses in Woodlands.
- Uncertain as to whether or not obscured glazing or other measures will be used to prevent overlooking/ ensure residential amenity is protected.
- The height of the proposed development will have a negative impact on daylight to existing houses.
- The proposed development would have a negative visual impact on the amenity of the area.
- There is a need for photomontages/ visual impact skyline drawings to indicate the height of the school and how they will appear from Woodlands.
- Potential for negative impacts through light pollution generated by this development.
- Uncertainty if sports/ play areas will be floodlit which in turn would give rise to light pollution.
- Request that a wall be built behind the Woodlands estate and which would reduce the volume of noise generated by this development.
- Loss of privacy and residential amenity through the location of the proposed development.
- The proposed Navan Central railway station will give rise to more pedestrians in the area and who may pass through the Woodlands estate. This in turn will negative impact on privacy and residential amenity.
- The proposed access route would give rise to increased litter in the area.

Other Issues:

- Concern about noise generated as a result of this development.
- Negative impact on wildlife with particular reference to foxes, bats and hedgehogs found in the area.
- A video was provided showing bats flying in this area.
- Concern about the loss of trees and green space in Woodlands.
- Uncertainty about the use of the schools outside of the school day and this may give rise to additional nuisance/ loss of residential amenity in the evenings/ outside of school times.
- Concern about the use of the schools for summer camps etc.
- Potential for solar panels on the roof and which would result in an increase in the height of the structures here.
- Similarly, the provision of telecommunication antennae on the roof could impact on wi-fi etc. in the area.
- Uncertainty over who will deal with security issues on site such as who will turn off alarms that may be set off.
- Unsure if CCTV will be provided on site and who will monitor this/ and from where will they monitor it.
- Concern about the reference to 'Future Expansion' on the site layout plans and what exactly does this mean.
- Reference is made to the refusal of two creches in the area due to the volume of traffic they would generate. Note: No address or planning reference is provided on these.
- Existing green areas in Woodlands 'are not public parks'.
- Query as to how long this development will take to complete.
- Query over reference to secondary access in the Traffic & Transportation Report via Stocking Avenue; the observer was not aware of a Stocking Avenue in Navan.

4.0 Planning History

PA. Ref.915 refers to a March 1991 decision to grant permission for 23 housing units on this site.

The following refer to adjacent lands:

ABP Ref. 306021 refers to a July 2020 decision to grant permission for a Strategic Housing Development of 544 residential units in the form of 260 houses and 284 apartments on lands to the east/ south east of the subject site. This development is substantially complete.

PA Ref. 2360450 refers to a May 2024 decision to grant permission for modifications to the strategic Housing Development (Large-Scale Residential Development) permitted under An Bord Pleanála (ABP) Ref. ABP-306021-19, as previously amended by Meath County Council (MCC) Refs. 221258 and 221309 (known as Baker Hall). The proposed modifications include the replacement of 17 no. permitted dwellings (1, 2 bed units and 3 bed units) contained in Duplex Block 1 and Corner Block CB5F, with 9 no. units consisting of 5 no. 2 bed sheltered housing bungalow units and 4 no. two storey townhouse units, together with all associated and ancillary site and development works including landscaping, boundary treatments, bin storage, public lighting, internal footpaths, car parking and bicycle parking. The demolition and clearance of Belmont Lodge (249.5sq m), a vacant two storey detached house with a single storey garage, to facilitate the construction of 7 no. two storey, 3 bed houses and public open spaces, together with all associated and ancillary site and development works including car parking, landscaping, boundary treatments, pedestrian footpaths, public lighting, drainage and water supply infrastructure. In total, the proposed development will provide 16 no. dwellings. The proposed development also includes the conversion of an existing vehicular access from the Dublin Road (via the Belmont House Entrance Gates, a protected structure - RPS No. 90939) to a pedestrian and cycle only access, with a historic access avenue to be reinstated as a pedestrian path between the Dublin Road and the permitted Strategic Housing Development.

PA Ref. 22/1309 refers to a May 2023 decision to grant permission for the demolition and clearance of a single storey building and the construction of 22 no. dwellings together with associated works, all on lands within the curtilage of Belmont House (a protected structure - RPS ID 90938).

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Development Plan

The subject site is zoned G1 – ‘Community Infrastructure’ in the Meath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 and which has the zoning objective ‘To provide for necessary community, social, and educational facilities.’

Permitted Uses include:

‘..Education, Leisure / Recreation / Sports Facilities, Place of Public Worship, Playing Pitches, Playgrounds..’.

The ‘Development Management Standards and Land Use Zoning Objectives’ are provided in Chapter 11 of the Meath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027.

The following Policies/ Objectives/ Sections of the Meath County Development Plan, in order by chapter, are considered to be relevant to this development:

Chapter 7. Community Building Strategy

Policy:

SOC POL 3 states ‘To ensure that, where practicable, community, recreational and open space facilities are clustered, with the community facilities being located in local centres or combined with school facilities, as appropriate. Community facilities should be located close to or within walking distance of housing, accessible to all sectors of the community and facilitate multi-use functions through their design and layout.’

SOC POL 5 states ‘To require, as part of all new large residential and commercial developments, and in existing developments, where appropriate, that provision is made for facilities including local/neighbourhood shops, childcare facilities, schools and recreational facilities, and to seek their provision concurrent with development.’

Section 7.7.3 refers to ‘Education Facilities’. Section 7.7.3.1 provides details on ‘Additional Primary and Post Primary Educational Requirements’ and included in the lists is an additional primary school and an additional secondary school for Navan.

The following are noted:

SOC POL 16 – ‘To ensure the provision of preschool, primary and post primary education facilities in conjunction with the planning and development of residential

areas, maximises opportunities for use of walking, cycling and use of public transport.'

SOC POL 17 – 'To ensure that adequate lands and services are zoned and reserved to cater for the establishment, improvement or expansion of all educational facilities in the County. The Council also supports the concept of multi-campus educational facilities.'

SOC POL 19 – 'To encourage, support and develop opportunities to open up schools to wider community usage in conjunction with the Department of Education and other stakeholders.'

SOC OBJ 4 – 'To facilitate the Department of Education, LMETB, other statutory and non-statutory agencies in the necessary provision of preschool, primary, post primary and third level educational facilities throughout the County by reserving lands for such uses.'

The following are also stated:

'In addition to the above locations, the Plan makes provision for future educational facilities through the identification and reservation of potential new sites/ sites to accommodate the potential future expansion /relocation of existing facilities. In the identification of sites, consideration needs to be given both to the co-location of childcare provision and the potential use of school facilities by the wider community outside of school hours and during school holidays. Future school provision, within new growth areas specifically, will be planned and implemented in tandem with residential development. The age profile of the County is of particular relevance and it is likely that additional schools provision will be required over the plan period.

In addition to new school development, the Council will support the appropriate development and/or redevelopment of existing schools within the County that will enhance existing facilities, including sports facilities, on site. All planning applications received for school developments should have regard to any requirements set out by the Department of Education and standard planning criteria (Refer also to Chapter 11 Development Management Standards).'

Section 11.5.7 provides details on 'Separation Distances' and the following are noted:

DM OBJ 18: A minimum of 16 metres separation between directly opposing rear or side windows above ground floor level in the case of detached, semi-detached, terraced units shall generally be observed.

DM OBJ 19: A minimum of 16 metres separation distance between opposing rear or side windows will apply in the case of apartments/duplex units up to three storeys in height.

DM OBJ 20: Any residential development proposal which exceeds three or more storeys in height shall demonstrate adequate separation distances having regard to layout, size and design between blocks to ensure privacy and protection of residential amenity.

The relaxation of any of the standards set out at DM OBJ 18-21 will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and should not be accepted as the Council setting a precedent for future development.'

Section 11.7.4 of the Meath County Development Plan refers to 'Education' and it states that:

All sites for schools shall comply with the requirements of the following:

- 'The Provision of Schools and the Planning System A Code of Practice for Planning Authorities', 2008, or any update thereof;
- Technical guidance document TGD025 (or any such updated document) in respect of primary schools;
- Technical guidance document TGD 027 (or any such updated document) in respect of post primary schools.

DM OBJ 71: Assessing planning applications for new schools and/ or redevelopment/ extensions of existing schools, the Planning Authority will have regard to the following:

- Site location, proximity of school to catchment area, size of site relative to outdoor space requirements and the future needs of the school (i.e. sufficient space provided for future expansion).
- Public transport availability.

- Traffic and transport impact, good, safe accessible pedestrian and cyclist routes to and from the school from nearby residential and commercial areas.
- Provision of safe and adequate set down facilities for buses.
- Provision of adequate, secure, covered cycle facilities.
- Provision of safe access and adequate car parking and set down areas to facilitate drop off/pick up.
- Adequate signage, lighting and boundary treatments.
- Impact on local amenities.
- Out of school hours uses.'

Also relevant:

DM OBJ 73: Dual function of sports facilities/halls etc, outside of school hours will be encouraged where the use of such facilities will be of a benefit to the wider community, however, any outside hours usage of the school should not be to the detriment of adjoining residential amenities.

DM OBJ 74: To require that all planning applications for new schools are accompanied by a Mobility Management Plan. Existing schools seeking permission to expand will also be required to provide a Mobility Management Plan.'

5.2. Other Guidance

The Planning System and Flood Risk Management - Guidelines for Planning Authorities, November 2009

Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets – Department of Transport

Permeability Best Practice Guide – National Transport Authority

5.3. Natural Heritage Designations

- Jamestown Bog NHA (Site Code 001324) is located 8.45km to the west of the subject site.
- The nearest European Sites are River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC (Site Code 002299) which is 135m from the subject site and River Boyne and River

Blackwater SAP (Site Code 004232) and which is also 135m from the subject site.

6.0 EIA Screening

- 6.1. The proposed development is not a class for the purposes of EIA as per the classes of development set out in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. Refer to Form 1 in Appendix 1 of report.
- 6.2. Having regard to the nature, scale and extent of the proposed development, site location, the nature of the receiving environment, there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development. The need for an environmental impact assessment can, therefore, be excluded at preliminary examination and a screening determination is not required in this instance.

7.0 Water Framework Directive Screening

- 7.1. I conclude that on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development will not result in a risk of deterioration on any water body either qualitatively or quantitatively or on a temporary or permanent basis or otherwise jeopardise any water body in reaching its WFD objectives and consequently can be excluded from further assessment. (refer to form in Appendix 3 for details).

8.0 The Appeal

8.1. Grounds of Appeal

Two third party appeals were received, and the following points were made, which I have summarised:

- The proposed development is out of character with the area through the height, bulk, massing and design of the school buildings.
- The development would be visually obtrusive in this established urban area.
- The proposed development would be overbearing on the area.

- The proposed development will overlook existing houses which will result in a loss of privacy/ residential amenity.
- There will be an increase in ambient noise as a result of this development, and which would have a negative impact on residential amenity.
- The provision of the pedestrian link between Woodlands and the subject site would give rise to a loss of privacy through the number of pupils going through Woodlands and into the schools.
- Concern about safety in terms of traffic safety but also safeguarding concerns through the opening of this linkway.
- It is not clear what advantage this new link will provide. The non provision of this would not result in significantly increased travel times.
- The proposed development of the link between Woodlands and the subject site would have an environmental impact through the loss of trees and green space.
- Reference is made to the National Transport Authority's Permeability Best Practice Guide and in terms of recommended consultation, this has not taken place.
- The proposed access would also impact on these amenity spaces through the loss of green space, areas for dog walkers to use and also there are containers here in use for the growing of vegetables by residents of Woodlands.
- Concern about the legal right of the developer, LMETB, to propose a pedestrian link at this point. There is an existing laneway that would provide a connection to the school. This runs from Academy Street to Woodview Estate, though is partially closed off.
- The proposed development would give rise to significant volumes of traffic and pedestrians in the area. This is already an issue with significant pedestrian traffic passing through that is not from the area.
- The area around Academy Street has already seen significant volumes of traffic due to the housing in Baker Hall and due to the Bus Éireann Dublin to Navan bus service arriving in the town from this direction. The proposed development would increase the volume of traffic in this area.

- There has been a history of anti-social behaviour in the area, and this may increase due to the proposed development. Reference is made to the receipt of a grant to provide for security fencing in part of the estate due to incidents of anti-social behaviour.
- It is unclear if the school will be used for activities outside of standard school times. This refers to night classes, summer school and the use of the sports facilities by third parties. A separate permission should be obtained for these uses.
- No flood lighting should be in use between 18.00 and 8.30 in the morning as this would have a negative impact on residents adjoining the site.
- Request that a light assessment be provided, a report on out of hour activity on site and also on the installation of telecommunication antennae/ aerials on the proposed buildings on site.
- The construction of this development would be expected to have a negative impact on the residential amenity of the area through the generation of noise, dust and disruption as well as noise pollution.
- Concern about the impact of the development on the sleep patterns of residents in the area.
- Query over statements in the submitted 'Preliminary Construction Environmental Management Plan' in terms of operating hours and comments on how construction workers will get to the site.
- Request that a contact person be provided who residents can liaise with in terms of the construction phase with specific reference to noise and vibration.
- Accepts that there is a need for additional educational facilities in Navan, but this area is already well served with a number of schools listed in the appeal.

The appeals are supported with photographs, elevational drawings and documentation including original submissions to Meath County Council, ABP decision and press cuttings on incidents in the area.

8.2. Applicant's Response

The applicant submitted the following response to the third-party appeals:

- The 'Project History' is provided and it includes reference to the fact that over 1,000 signatures were received in support of this development.
- Refers directly to the proposed links and the amendments to the development required under Condition 5 and 6(c). In terms of the emergency access, this is on lands outside of the control of the applicant and details have been provided that existing roads would be sufficient emergency access during times of flooding. Engineering details are provided in Appendix A of the Appeal Response.
- It is considered appropriate from a safety point of view that only one access be provided to a school.
- The requirements under Condition 5 and 6(c) were considered to be onerous and a First Party Appeal was prepared but was deemed to be outside of the appeal period.

The applicants statement then considers the points raised in each of the appeals:

Helen O'Neill

Item 1: Visual Impact: Disagrees with the appeal and the applicant considers that the building is appropriate in this location. The site is zoned G1 – Community Infrastructure and which allows for educational facilities. The design has been detailed in the application documentation, but the building is mostly two storey except for a three storey section that sits into the hill. The building is designed to address issues of overlooking and a shadow study was provided in support of the application. Single storey section is set back by 24m from the rear of the houses in Woodland and the two storey block is set back by 38m which exceeds the requirements of the Meath County Development Plan.

Agrees with the appellant that the provision of the link into Woodlands is not necessary and would be disruptive, and the necessary lands to provide the link are not within the control of the applicant.

Item 2: Environmental Impact: All trees on this site are located in the boundaries and it is intended to retain these as much as possible. The issue of the link is raised and the impact it would have on the green space in Woodlands. The applicant agrees with the appellant on this matter and there is no need for the provision of this pedestrian link into Woodlands.

Item 3: Traffic and Safety Concerns: The applicant again agrees with the appellant that the provision of the link into Woodlands would give rise to increased traffic, potential congestion and pedestrian safety. The proposed single access point is considered appropriate for this development.

Item 4: No details provided, skips from Item 3 to Item 5.

Item 5: Noise and Anti-Social Behaviour: The appeal concern about increased noise and anti-social behaviour is agreed with, in terms of the provision of the access route through Woodlands. The use of the school outside of hours would not require a planning permission as there is no change of use. Access would be from Academy Street and would not impact on the residents of Woodlands. Refers to Condition 8, use of the facilities for the benefit of the community, of the Meath County Council decision to grant permission and the applicant confirms that this will be complied with. There is no proposal at this time for the provision of flood lighting or telecommunications antennae on the site.

Item 6: Character and Pattern of Development: Disagrees with the concerns in relation to the design of the building and this has been addressed under Item 1. The second issue here is the provision of the walkway through Woodlands and this has been addressed in this appeal response. The applicant agrees with the appellant on this and restates that the 'applicant or schools do not require these links'.

Item 7: Construction Impacts: Restrictions in relation to construction processes are set out under Condition 12 and 13 of the Meath County Council decision to grant permission. Specific reference is made to Condition no. 13, and the applicant confirms that this will be carried out in full.

Item 8: Requirement for a school in this location in Navan: The applicant refers to the G1 zoning, the current situation of school in temporary accommodation and the fact that the Department of Education have identified a need for both schools in this location.

Concerned Residents of Woodlands Housing Estate:

Item 1: Pupil Safeguarding: Concern over the proposed access route and the applicant agrees with the appellant on this matter. These links are not required, and the route is over lands for which they have no control over. Concern also about the

location of the Woodlands access in close proximity to the proposed sensory play area.

Item 2: Proposed Pathway versus Existing Pathways – Permeability: The appeal refers to three existing pedestrian access points/ routes and the applicant agrees that there is no requirement for this access through Woodlands.

The applicant includes details of the First Party Appeal drafted in response to Conditions 5 and 6(c). This was deemed to be invalid and not accepted. Details are provided in Appendix A of the applicant's appeal response. Appendix B includes a 'Proposed Site Plan/ Boundary and Material Drawing' indicating the omission of the Woodlands pedestrian link.

In conclusion, it is requested that permission be upheld, but also it is requested that full consideration be given to the need for the inclusion of Conditions 5 and 6(c). The appeal response is supported with relevant planning history details, photographs, Engineering details including a Copy of the Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment for a residential development at Belmont, Academy Street, dated November 2019, and a letter of support from the Principal of St Ultan's Special School, including a request that only a single entrance be provided.

8.3. Planning Authority Response

The Planning Authority responded that all issues have been substantively addressed in their reports dated the 30th of August 2024 and 13th of July 2025. It is requested that the Commission uphold the decision of the Planning Authority to grant permission. They did add that the Scoil Ard Rí has been in temporary accommodation for 12 years and the building in use by St Ultans is not suitable for the needs of their pupils. The site is suitably zoned for this development and is located within the urban centre of Navan. Request that decision is upheld, and permission is granted for this development.

9.0 Assessment

9.1. The main issues that arise for assessment in relation to this appeal can be addressed under the following headings:

- Nature of the Development
- Design and Impact on the Character of the Area
- Access
- Water Supply, Drainage and Flood Issues
- Other Issues

9.2. Nature of the Development

9.2.1. Background: The proposed development on this site, of 3.3 hectares, consists of the provision of two schools and associated site/ access works on lands to the west/north west of the Baker Hall Road, in Navan, Co. Meath. The proposed schools are for St. Ultan's Special School, which is currently located approximately 1.1km to the north of the subject site at Flower Hill, and for Árd Rí Community National School, which is located in prefabs in Navan Rugby Football Club, at Balreask, 1km to the south east of the subject site. From their website (www.stultansnavan.com), St. Ultan's currently have 125 pupils between the ages of 4 and 18 years. The subject development would provide for permanent; purpose built schools and provides for additional capacity.

9.2.2. Zoning: The subject land is zoned G1 – Community Infrastructure and as this allows for educational development, the proposed development is acceptable in terms of the zoning objective. Section 7.7.3.1 of the Meath County Development Plan indicates a requirement for an additional primary and an additional secondary school. Whilst the occupants of the proposed schools are existing educational facilities, the provision of new schools would allow for their expansion as well as providing for improved facilities for their pupils.

9.2.3. Conclusion on Nature of the Development: The subject site is suitably zoned for educational facilities, and the Meath County Development Plan indicates a need for new schools in the Navan area. I am satisfied that the proposed site is suitable in terms of zoning and will provide for significant improvements to the range of schools available in Navan town centre.

9.3. Design and Impact on the Character of the Area

9.3.1. Layout Design: The proposed development of two schools is based on a campus layout with a single vehicular access to the site from Baker Hill. A full assessment of

Access is made in Section 9.4 of this report. The centre of the site is to be occupied with the access, internal road layout and car parking for staff/ visitors. To the west of this are all weather pitches, one large pitch and two smaller ones. The schools are located to the north, and south sections of the site and they adjoin grass play areas/ landscaped areas.

9.3.2. The proposed layout is considered to be appropriate for the nature of this development and allows for a shared access, shared car parking and shared play/ sports areas, whilst ensuring that the schools retain their own character on this site. There are no structures on site and trees are located along the site perimeter only. I note reference in a third party submission to the original application to bats in the area, but from the site visit it was apparent that roosting locations would be limited and impacts to the site boundary would be minimal. No issues of concern in relation to bats were identified in the Planning Authority report.

9.3.3. Building Design: Árd Rí Community National School is located to the northern part of the site and consists of a mix of single, two and three storey elements. The taller parts are located where the gradient falls and the single storey to the north west is located to the nearest point to existing houses, but which still achieves an acceptable separation, and the taller two and three storey sections provide for a separation of over 22m.

9.3.4. The elevations of the proposed Árd Rí Community National School are to be primarily painted plaster relieved with brick and the windows will be relieved with coloured panels. The roof to consist of a standing seam panel. The other schools, St. Ultan's to be finished with similar materials, though the sections of brick are reduced in area and the brick reads as a different colour to that used in Árd Rí Community National School.

9.3.5. I consider that the proposed building designs are acceptable and will present a modern welcoming appearance to the pupils of these schools. The applicant has made good use of the site contours, and which ensures that adequate setbacks to existing houses are provided for. The front elevations are designed to provide for a suitable frontage addressing the car park/ road access and pedestrian access to these buildings. They will also provide a suitable frontage when viewed from the Baker Hall Road.

- 9.3.6. I do not consider that the proposed schools are overly high and/ or bulky in appearance. As stated there had been good use taken of the existing contours which allows for three storeys in part of the site, whilst ensuring that the overall height is kept low. I have no concern regarding the issue raised about the bulk of these school buildings. The different heights, use of different materials and mix of heights all combine to reduce the potential bulk of these buildings when viewed from existing/ adjoining houses. I consider that the applicant has provided a good quality of architectural design here having regard to the site topography but also in ensuring that bulk of building is not an issue.
- 9.3.7. Impact on Existing Residential Amenity: Concern was raised in the appeals in relation to overlooking leading to a loss of privacy and in terms of overshadowing. Once again, I refer to the good use of the site, its topography and through the high quality architectural design of the building layout in addressing these issues. As reported, I am satisfied that the separation distances are acceptable for this development.
- 9.3.8. As demonstrated in the applicant's appeal response, separation distances of 24m between the General Purpose Block and the existing houses in Woodlands are proposed, and separation distances of 38m between the rear of the two storey block and the houses in Woodlands demonstrate that the separation is in excess of the 22m minimum requirement provided in the Meath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027. Section 11.5.7 of the development plan now specifies a separation of 16m between residential units, and whilst the proposed buildings are not residential units, the applicant has demonstrated that adequate separation distances can be provided for, and which in turn will ensure that residential privacy is protected.
- 9.3.9. I do not foresee any issue of concern in relation to overshadowing considering the orientation of the school buildings and their location on site. In support of their application, the applicant has provided 'Shadow Study Diagrams' dated June 2024. I note the information provided here but I also wish to bring to the attention of the Commission that the applicant has provided test details for the 21st of February and 21st of May, in addition to the 21st of September, when usually these would be done for the 21st of March, 21st of May and the 21st of September.

9.3.10. The test results are as expected and there will be little if any overshadowing of the existing houses in Woodlands. There is overshadowing up to midday on the 21st of February, but this is as expected for a time of year with low sun and limited sun hours. I would suggest a level of caution over the February details, the diagram for 9am suggests little daylight, however on that date sunrise would be at 7.32 and by 9am there would be good levels of daylight available here. Overall, I am satisfied that the proposed development will have negligible impacts through overshadowing of existing houses in Woodlands. The presence of mature trees on the boundary between the subject site and Woodlands is likely to have a greater noticeable impact.

9.3.11. Conclusion on Design and Impact on the Character of the Area: I am satisfied that the proposed design of the schools are acceptable in this location. The height and design have full regard to the topography of the site, and the school buildings will provide for appropriate elevational treatments when viewed from Woodlands to the north/ north west and from the Baker Hall Road to the south/ south east. I am satisfied that there are no issues of concern in relation to overlooking leading to a loss of privacy and potential overshadowing would have a negligible impact on the residential amenity of Woodlands and the other adjoining residential areas.

9.4. Access

9.4.1. As I have already reported, there is a single vehicular access provided onto the Baker Hall Road. This also provides the primary pedestrian/ cycle access to the site. No particular issues of concern were raised in the appeals about this access. Further information was sought by the Planning Authority on the junction with the Baker Hall Road and on other aspects of the layout. The Meath County Council Transport Department reported no objection to these details.

9.4.2. Two other access points, for pedestrian use, are indicated on the Site Layout plan – Drawing No. PP/21-42/ PP 0003 and these are to the south of the site/ north west of ‘The Close’ and to the west/ north west providing access into Woodlands. The access between the subject site and Woodlands was raised as a significant concern in the original application by third parties. In response to the further information request issued by Meath County Council under Item 4 (d) and 4 (e), the applicant proposed a revised layout that included the omission of these two entry/ exit points.

The Planning Authority required under Condition 6(c) the provision of these connections and revised details were to be submitted for their written agreement prior to the commencement of development. The applicant has requested their omission, and the two appeals have also sought the removal of the link through Woodlands.

9.4.3. I agree with the appellants and the applicant on this issue. The access to The Close only duplicates what the main access does, any time saving by pupils would be insignificant and there is no significant gain here in terms of permeability. I consider that the revised layout is acceptable and there is no need for the access/ link towards The Close.

9.4.4. I also consider that the proposed access through Woodlands would be problematic. The applicant agrees with the appellants and considers that this should be omitted. The applicant states that the school no longer require this access and that there may be pupil safety issues having two entrance/ exits points serving this school. This access is also adjacent to a proposed sensory garden and may negatively impact on this space. The appellants have raised issues including the use of land not in the control of the applicant, the loss of green space/ trees, potential for anti-social behaviour and traffic congestion/ safety issues through the setting down/ collection of pupils here.

9.4.5. From my site visit it was apparent that the space that the route is proposed through currently provides an amenity function for the local community and includes two large planters where plants/ vegetables are grown. The provision of an access through this space would fundamentally change the character of this green area and also that of the adjoining residential lands. If provided, it is likely that this access would only be used by local children to get to school but only limited numbers would walk. This would likely be used as a set down area and which in turn would give rise to traffic congestion in this area. The road network within Woodlands meanders and was not designed as a through route for pedestrians.

9.4.6. I recommend that this access point not be included in a grant of permission. The inclusion of this access point would be likely to have a negative impact on the residential amenity of those living in Woodlands and would only have limited benefit for the two schools. The applicant has indicated that a single entrance is best in

terms of pupil welfare, and I generally agree with the applicant in this case. The nature of the development is such that full regard must be had to the welfare of the pupils attending the school.

9.4.7. Conclusion on Access: The applicant has set out a justification for the provision of a single access point to serve this school. The access point originally proposed by The Close would have limited benefit for pupils attending this school and I consider that the access through Woodlands would have a negative impact on existing residential amenity there as well as giving rise to potential pupil welfare issues, considering the nature of these schools. I therefore recommend that these access points not be provided here. If there was demand in the future, then a separate planning application could be made to provide for these links.

9.5. **Water Supply, Drainage and Flood Issues**

9.5.1. Water Supply & Foul Drainage: No objection has been raised in relation to water supply or in terms of foul drainage to serve this development. The Meath Water Supply Capacity Register, dated August 2025, indicated on the 4th of November 2025 that there was 'Capacity Available - LoS improvement required' for Navan. In terms of Wastewater Treatment Capacity, the Navan WWTP had a 'Green' available capacity for August 2025 when checked on the 4th of November 2025. Uisce Éireann reported no objection to this development subject to condition in relation to the entering into a Connection Agreement for water supply/ foul drainage to serve this development.

9.5.2. Surface Water Drainage: Section 3 of the applicant's 'Infrastructure Design Report' provides full details on the proposed surface water drainage system to serve this development/ site. There is an existing 375mm diameter surface water drainage system to the east of the site in Baker Hill Road and this has capacity to serve the subject site. The on-site surface water drainage system has been designed in accordance with the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GDSDS) and surface water discharge will be at greenfield runoff rates. Full details of attenuation systems are provided in this Section of the applicant's report.

9.5.3. Flood Risk: The submitted 'Infrastructure Design Report' under Section 2 provides full details on 'Flood Risk Assessment'. This assessment has had full regard to the OPW's 'Summary Local Area Report', the information on www.floodinfo.ie, the

Navan Fluvial Flood Extents CFRAMS, as well as 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management, Guidelines for Planning Authorities'. The site is considered to lie within Flood Zone C, and the nature of development is acceptable within this zone. It is stated in the applicant's report that emergency access to the site will be via Baker Hall during times of flood events. Mitigation measures include the maintenance of the proposed drainage system and the possible overland flow routing towards open space should not be blocked. In conclusion the applicant reports that the development has suitable 'flood protection up to and including 100-year return event'.

9.5.4. Meath County Council Environment Flooding Section raises a concern about the fact that part of Academy Street, which provides the access to Baker Hall is within Flood Zone A. Further information was requested from the applicant on this matter. In their grant of permission, Meath County Council included Condition no. 5. Requiring the provision of a trafficable access route from the site for emergency vehicles onto St. Columbus Crescent or else propose an alternative route, and Condition no. 6.(c) requiring a 4m wide concrete path between 'The Close in Baker Hall to the existing path in St. Columbus Crescent, thereby forming part of the emergency route in Condition no.5.

9.5.5. The applicant has raised these issues in their appeal response. In summary, both conditions are outside of the control of the applicant and engineering details provided by the applicant indicates no concerns regarding flooding and there are no requirements for a justification test in accordance with the Flood Risk Guidelines. The access road which serves this development, in the form of the Baker Hall Road, was developed to serve a residential development, which is under construction and a number of units are complete/ occupied. The issue of flooding on Academy Street was addressed through an Oral Hearing and the Inspectors Report under ABP Ref. 306021 for a Strategic Housing Development and there was no requirement for additional emergency access.

9.5.6. The issue of flooding was not raised as specific issues in the appeals; however I refer to the conditions, 5, 6(c) issued by the Planning Authority and would recommend that they not be included for the reasons raised by the applicant. I consider the following points have to be taken into account:

- The subject site and access road are within Flood Zone C.
- The access road serving the site was subject to flood risk assessment when approved under ABP Ref. 306021 and has now been constructed with a significant number of residential units served by it.
- Academy Street is the primary concern in relation to flooding and this is identified in the Meath County Council Development Plan – Flood Risk Assessment and also through OPW data. From the CFRAM map for Navan, the road/ street section of Academy Street is within a 1% Fluvial AEP Event, and a small section is within a 0.1% AEP Event.
- OPW data indicates that the most recent flood events on Academy Street were in 1991 and 2002, and these were further to the north west in the vicinity of the railway overbridge. No events have been identified on the subject site or in the immediate vicinity of the site.
- The conditions provided by Meath County Council are over third party lands and the applicant does not have consent or right to build on these lands.

9.5.7. I therefore consider that Meath County Council have proposed measures that are not required, and it would not be possible for the applicant to implement these conditions in any event. The flood events that would close this section of road are rare and there would be adequate notice if such flood events were to occur. This site has been zoned for community infrastructure use through the development plan process and has been subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The access road, Baker Hall Road, has been developed to serve over 500 residential units and no additional emergency route were required. The protection of public infrastructure including the existing road network within an established town centre is a matter for the Local Authority.

9.5.8. Conclusion on Water Supply, Drainage and Flood Issues: I am satisfied that the proposed development will be adequately served in terms of access, water and foul drainage. No issues of concern arise in terms of surface water drainage of the site. I am satisfied that the proposed development is acceptable in terms of the requirements of the Flood Risk Guidelines and having regard to the established form of development here.

9.6. Other Issues

- 9.6.1. Lighting: Concern was raised about potential light pollution and reference was made to floodlighting on site. Section 8.0 'Render Showcase' of the applicant's 'Architectural Planning Design Report' indicates that the proposed all weather pitch would be floodlit, lights on masts are clearly indicated here and I appreciate the concern of the appellants. However, Drawing Reference 2795-SMK-Z0-LX-DR-ME5064 – 'Proposed Site Lighting' clearly indicates the lux levels on and adjoining the site as a result of the proposed lighting scheme and there is no lighting in the area of the all-weather pitch. Any lighting proposed in this area would be subject to a new planning application.
- 9.6.2. Out of hours use: Concern was raised about the use of this facility outside of school hours. Considering the location of the schools within a town centre and the access arrangements, I do not foresee any issue of concern here. It is desirable that large halls/ General Purpose rooms be used to their maximum considering the investment in these spaces and also in the access and car parking facilities.
- 9.6.3. Having regard to the number of residential units in the immediate area, I consider the use of the proposed facilities outside of hours to be a significant benefit to the local community. The location and layout of the development will ensure that the use of on-site facilities would not have an adverse impact on the residential amenity of Woodview or the other existing residential areas. The use of the facilities outside of school hours would be in accordance with Policy SOC POL 19 and Objective DM OBJ 73 of the Meath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027.
- 9.6.4. Construction Management Plan: The applicant provided an updated Construction Environmental Management Plan in their Further Information response. Final details can be agreed by way of condition.
- 9.6.5. MMP: I note the submitted Mobility Management Plan (MMP), updated to 29th April 2025, and this is acceptable and is in accordance with Objective DM OBJ 74 of the Meath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027.
- 9.6.6. Development Contributions: Under Section 7 of the Meath County Council Development Contribution Scheme 2024 – 2029, dated 1st January 2024, it states 'Educational facilities shall include provision by or on behalf of the Department of Education and Science, Education & Training Boards, Boards of Management or

Patron Bodies shall be exempt.’ There is no requirement to include a development contribution for this proposal.

9.7. Conclusion

I consider that the proposed development is acceptable in terms of meeting the requirements of the Meath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027. The proposed development will provide for two schools in Navan, where there is an identified need, and on lands suitably zoned for such a development. Adequate details have been provided to demonstrate that the proposed development would have a negligible impact on the existing residential amenity of the area. The site is suitably serviced for this development.

10.0 Appropriate Assessment Screening

10.1.1. I have considered case ACP 323207-25 in light of the requirements S177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.

10.1.2. The subject lands are undeveloped and are under grass. The site is located within an established urban area to the south of Navan town centre. There is residential development currently under construction on the lands to the south/ east of the site. There are no water courses on or adjoining the site, though the River Boyne is located approximately 135m to the north east of the site. The area is served by public water supply and foul drainage.

10.1.3. The closest European Sites, part of the Natura 2000 Network, are:

- River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC (Site Code 002299)
- River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA (Site Code 004232)

Having considered the nature, scale and location of the project, I am satisfied that it can be eliminated from further assessment because it could not have any effect on a European Site. The reason for this conclusion is as follows:

- The nature and limited scale of the proposed development.
- The separation of the site from the European Sites, through established urban development and a number of significant streets/ roads.
- The absence of ecological pathways to any European Site.

- Taking into account the Screening Report from Meath County Council, the Planning Authority for the area.

I conclude that the proposed development (alone) would not result in likely significant effects on the River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC (Site Code 002299) and the River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA (Site Code 004232). The site is located within an established urban area, and which is served by suitable foul drainage and surface water drainage systems. The proposed development would have no likely significant effect in combination with other plans and projects on any European site(s).

No mitigation measures are required to come to these conclusions. Likely significant effects are excluded and therefore Appropriate Assessment (under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000) is not required.

11.0 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

11.1.1. Under Part 2, Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, the development is classed as 10(b)(iv) urban development. The proposed development is located in a built up area and has a stated area of 3.3 hectares. The proposed development is sub-threshold for mandatory EIA as the site area is less than 10 hectares. I have carried out an EIA screening determination on the project which is set out in Appendix 2 of this report.

11.1.2. Having regard to: -

- a) the nature and scale of the proposed development, which is below the threshold in respect of Class 10(b)(iv) of Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended,
- b) The existing use on the site and pattern of development in surrounding area,
- c) The availability of mains water and wastewater services to serve the proposed development,
- d) The location of the development outside of any sensitive lands,
- e) The guidance set out in the “Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development”, issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2003),

f) The criteria set out in Schedule 7 and 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended, and

g) The features and measures proposed by applicant envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise be significant effects on the environment,

It is considered that the proposed development would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment and that the preparation and submission of an environmental impact assessment report would not therefore be required.

11.1.3. A Screening Determination should be issued confirming that there is no requirement for an EIAR based on the above considerations.

12.0 Water Framework Directive

12.1. The subject site is located approximately 135m to the north east of the River Boyne, but there are no watercourses adjacent to the site, and the subject site overlies the Trim Ground Waterbody. The proposed development consists of the construction of two schools, car parking, playing areas and associated site works.

12.2. I have assessed the development and have considered the objectives as set out in Article 4 of the Water Framework Directive which seek to protect and, where necessary, restore surface & ground water waterbodies in order to reach good status (meaning both good chemical and good ecological status), and to prevent deterioration. I have undertaken a WFD Impact Assessment Stage 1: Screening and which is included in Appendix 3 after my report. This assessment considered the impact of the development on:

- Trim Groundwater Source
- River Boyne

12.3. The impact from the development was considered in terms of the construction and operational phases. Through the nature of the development, and separation distance to the relevant waterbodies, all potential impacts can be screened out.

Conclusion

12.4. I conclude that on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development will not result in a risk of deterioration on any water body (rivers, lakes,

groundwaters, transitional and coastal) either qualitatively or quantitatively or on a temporary or permanent basis or otherwise jeopardise any water body in reaching its WFD objectives and consequently can be excluded from further assessment.

13.0 Recommendation

Having regard to the above it is recommended that permission be granted based on the following reasons and considerations, and subject to the following attached conditions.

14.0 Reasons and Considerations

It is considered that subject to and compliance with the conditions set out below, the proposed development is acceptable in terms of the requirements of the Meath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027. The proposed development will provide for two schools in Navan, where there is an identified need, and on lands zoned G1 – Community Infrastructure which is a suitable zoning for such a development.

Adequate details have been provided to demonstrate that the proposed development would have a negligible impact on the existing residential amenity of the area.

Suitable access arrangements are available over Baker Hall Road providing good connections to the rest of Navan town centre and its hinterland. The proposed development will replace existing substandard school accommodation and will provide for significantly improved educational facilities for Navan town centre.

15.0 Conditions

1. The development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application, except as may otherwise be required in order to comply with the following conditions. Where such conditions require details to be agreed with the Planning Authority, the developer shall agree such details in writing with the Planning Authority prior to commencement of development and the development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the agreed particulars.

Reason: In the interest of clarity.

2. Details of the materials, colours, and textures of all the external finishes to the proposed buildings shall be as submitted with the application as revised, unless otherwise agreed in writing with, the Planning Authority prior to commencement of development. In default of agreement the matter(s) in dispute shall be referred to An Coimisiún Pleanála for determination.

Reason: In the interest of visual amenity.

3. A comprehensive boundary treatment and landscaping scheme shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the planning authority, prior to commencement of development. This scheme shall include the following:-

- (a) details of all proposed hard surface and/or permeable surface finishes, including samples of proposed paving slabs/materials for footpaths, kerbing and road surfaces within the development;
- (b) proposed locations of trees and other landscape planting in the development, including details of proposed species and settings;
- (c) details of proposed boundary treatments for the entire perimeter of the site, including heights, materials and finishes.

The boundary treatment and landscaping shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed scheme.

Reason: In the interest of visual amenity.

4. The following shall be complied with in full:
 - (a) The internal road network serving the proposed development including turning bays, junctions, parking areas, footpaths, and kerbs shall comply with the detailed construction standards of the planning authority for such works and design standards outlined in Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS).
 - (b) Footpaths shall be dished at the road junction in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interest of amenity and of traffic and pedestrian safety.

5. The development shall be carried out and operated in accordance with the provisions of the Mobility and Management Plan (MMP), dated 29th of April 2025, submitted to the planning authority on 16th of May 2025. The specific measures detailed in Section 6 'Implementation of the Mobility Management Plan' to achieve the objectives and modal split targets for the development shall be implemented in full upon. The developer shall undertake an annual monitoring exercise to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority and shall submit the results to the Planning Authority for consideration and placement on the public file.

Reason: To achieve a reasonable modal split in transport and travel patterns in the interest of sustainable development.

6. Prior to the occupation of the proposed development, the applicant shall submit for the written agreement of the Planning Authority full details of how the intended and frequency of use of the school facilities for the benefit of the local community in accordance with Policy SOC POL 19 of the Meath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027.

Reason: In the interest of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

7. Drainage arrangements including the attenuation and disposal of surface water shall comply with the requirements of the relevant Section of the Local Authority for such works and services.

Reason: In the interest of public health and surface water management.

8. The developer shall enter into water and wastewater connection agreement(s) with Uisce Éireann, prior to commencement of development.

Reason: In the interest of public health.

9. All service cables associated with the proposed development, such as electrical, telecommunications and communal television, shall be located underground.

Reason: In the interests of visual and residential amenity.

10. The developer shall engage a suitably qualified (licensed eligible) archaeologist to monitor (licensed under the National Monuments Acts) all site clearance works, topsoil stripping, groundworks. Should archaeological remains be identified during the course of archaeological monitoring, all works shall cease in the area of archaeological interest pending a decision of the Planning Authority, in consultation with the National Monuments Service, regarding appropriate mitigation.

The developer shall facilitate the archaeologist in recording any remains identified. Any further archaeological mitigation requirements specified by the planning authority, following consultation with the National Monuments Service, shall be complied with by the developer.

Following the completion of all archaeological work on site and any necessary post-excavation specialist analysis, the Planning Authority and the National Monuments Service shall be furnished with a final archaeological report describing the results of the monitoring and any subsequent required archaeological investigative work/excavation required. All resulting and associated archaeological costs shall be borne by the developer.

Reason: To ensure the continued preservation either in situ or by record of places, caves, sites, features or other objects of archaeological interest

11. The construction of the development shall be managed in accordance with a Construction Management Plan, which shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the Planning Authority prior to commencement of development. This plan shall provide details of intended construction practice for the development, including:
- a) Location of the site and materials compound(s) including area(s) identified for the storage of construction refuse;
 - b) Location of areas for construction site offices and staff facilities;
 - c) Details of site security fencing and hoardings;

- d) Details of on-site car parking facilities for site workers during the course of construction;
- e) Details of the timing and routing of construction traffic to and from the construction site and associated directional signage, to include proposals to facilitate the delivery of abnormal loads to the site;
- f) Measures to obviate queuing of construction traffic on the adjoining road network;
- g) Measures to prevent the spillage or deposit of clay, rubble or other debris on the public road network;
- h) Alternative arrangements to be put in place for pedestrians and vehicles in the case of the closure of any public road or footpath during the course of site development works;
- i) Details of appropriate mitigation measures for noise, dust and vibration, and monitoring of such levels. The following noise limits shall apply to construction activities: 70 dB(A) (LAeq 1 hour) between the hours of 08:00 and 19:00 Monday to Friday inclusive (excluding bank holidays) and between 09:00 and 14:00 on Saturdays when measured at any noise sensitive location in the vicinity of the site. Sound levels shall not exceed 45 dB(A) (LAeq 1 hour) at any other time following completion of the site development works;
- j) Containment of all construction-related fuel and oil within specially constructed bunds to ensure that fuel spillages are fully contained. Such bunds shall be roofed to exclude rainwater;
- k) Off-site disposal of construction/demolition waste and details of how it is proposed to manage excavated soil;
- l) Means to ensure that surface water run-off is controlled such that no silt or other pollutants enter local surface water sewers or drains.
- m) A record of daily checks that the works are being undertaken in accordance with the Construction Management Plan shall be kept for inspection by the Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interest of amenities, public health and safety.

12. Site development and building works shall be carried out only between the hours of 0800 to 1900 Mondays to Fridays inclusive, between 0800 to 1400 hours on

Saturdays and not at all on Sundays and public holidays. Deviation from these times will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances where prior written approval has been received from the Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to safeguard the residential amenities of property in the vicinity.

I confirm that this report represents my professional planning assessment, judgement and opinion on the matter assigned to me and that no person has influenced or sought to influence, directly or indirectly, the exercise of my professional judgement in an improper or inappropriate way.

Paul O'Brien

Inspectorate

6th November 2025

Appendix 1

EIA Pre-Screening

An Coimisiún Pleanála	ACP-323207-25		
Case Reference			
Proposed Development Summary	Development consists of two schools, car parking, play areas, road access and all associated site works on a site to the south of Navan town centre.		
Development Address	Baker Hall, Limekilnhill, Navan, Co. Meath		
1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a 'project' for the purposes of EIA? (that is involving construction works, demolition, or interventions in the natural surroundings)	Yes	√	
2. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 1 or Part 2, Schedule 5, Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)?			
Yes	Tick/or leave blank		
No	Tick or leave blank	√	Schools are not a listed class. The site area is given as 3.3 hectares and the lands are zoned G1 – Community Infrastructure. They do not meet/ exceed 10 hectares in the case of other

			parts of a built-up area. They are not within a Business District, as the predominant land uses are not retail or commercial.
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3. Does the proposed development equal or exceed any relevant THRESHOLD set out in the relevant Class?

Yes			
No	√	Site Area is 3.3 hectares and the threshold in the case of other parts of a built-up area is 10 hectares.	

4. Is the proposed development below the relevant threshold for the Class of development [sub-threshold development]?

N/A			
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5. Has Schedule 7A information been submitted?

No	√	Pre-screening determination conclusion remains as above (Q1 to Q4)
Yes		

Inspector: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 2: AA Screening Determination

Test for likely significant effects

Screening for Appropriate Assessment Test for likely significant effects	
Brief description of project	<p>Development consists of two schools, car parking, play areas, road access and all associated site works on a site to the south of Navan town centre.</p> <p>A full description is provided in Section 2.0 of the Inspectors Report.</p>
Brief description of development site characteristics and potential impact mechanisms	<p>The subject lands are undeveloped and are under grass. The site is located within an established urban area to the south of Navan town centre. There is residential development currently under construction on the lands to the south/ east of the site. There are no water courses on or adjoining the site, though the River Boyne is located approximately 135m to the north east of the site. The area is served by public water supply and foul drainage.</p> <p>Potential Impact Mechanisms include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Release of dust during demolition and construction phases. • Noise and traffic nuisance during demolition, construction and operational phases. • Pollution of water courses during the construction and operational phase.
Screening report	A 'Screening for Appropriate Assessment' dated June 2024 has been prepared by g+a Landscape Architecture on behalf of the applicant.
Natura Impact Statement	None
Relevant submissions	None from prescribed bodies in relation to AA.
Step 2. Identification of relevant European sites using the Source-pathway-receptor model	

The proposed development is not located within or adjacent to any designated site. therefore, the proposed development would not result in any direct effects such as habitat loss on any European Site.

European Site (code)	Qualifying interests ¹ Link to conservation objectives (NPWS, date)	Distance from proposed development (km)	Ecological connections	Consider further in screening Y/N
River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC (002299)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alkaline fens [7230] • Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> [91E0] • River Lamprey [1099] • Salmon [1106] • Otter [1355] 	135m to the north east	<p>No direct hydrological connections.</p> <p>Surface water will be treated on site through proposed SUDs measures as standard for a development of this nature and will be directed to the existing storm water drainage network.</p> <p>There is an indirect hydrological pathway to this SPA via foul wastewater drainage. Foul water from the development will be directed through the existing public foul network and processed at Navan WWTP. Plant is within capacity.</p> <p>The site is within 150m of the River Boyne and further consideration to be made in relation to noise impact.</p>	Y

River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA (004232)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kingfisher [A229] 	135m to the north east	No direct hydrological connections. Surface water will be treated on site through proposed SUDs measures as standard for a development of this nature and will be directed to the existing storm water drainage network. There is an indirect hydrological pathway to this SPA via foul wastewater drainage. Foul water from the development will be directed through the existing public foul network and processed at Navan WWTP. Plant is within capacity.	Y
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Step 3. Describe the likely effects of the project (if any, alone or in combination) on European Sites

There is an indirect hydrological connection to the River Boyne through foul water and surface water drainage, further consideration of these sites is required.

AA Screening matrix

Site name Qualifying interests	Possibility of significant effects (alone) in view of the conservation objectives of the site*	
	Impacts	Effects
River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC (002299)	Direct: None, due to location of the site and scale of development. The site is within 150m of the River Boyne and consideration is made of impact on Otters, however having regard to the location of the site within	Potential damage to the habitats and qualifying interest species dependent on water quality, an impact of sufficient magnitude could undermine the sites conservation objectives.

	<p>an established urban area and the site is separated from the river by a number of busy roads, urban development and proposed landscaping, it can be concluded that no impacts arise and no mitigation measures are required.</p> <p>Indirect: There is an indirect hydrological pathway to the SAC via foul drainage. This is routed from the site through the existing public drainage system and is processed at the Navan WWTP. The plant is with capacity and no effects on the SAC are likely, in the absence of mitigation measures.</p>	
	Likelihood of significant effects from proposed development (alone): N	
	If No, is there likelihood of significant effects occurring in combination with other plans or projects? N	
	Impacts	Effects
River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA (004232)	<p>Direct: None, due to location of the site and scale of development.</p> <p>Indirect: There is an indirect hydrological pathway to the SPA via foul drainage. This is routed from the site through the existing public drainage system and is processed at the Navan WWTP. The plant is with capacity and no effects on the SPA are likely, in the absence of mitigation measures.</p>	Potential damage to the habitats and qualifying interest species dependent on water quality, an impact of sufficient magnitude could undermine the sites conservation objectives.
	Likelihood of significant effects from proposed development (alone): N	
	If No, is there likelihood of significant effects occurring in combination with other plans or projects? N	
The scale and nature of development combined with the location of the site within an established, serviced, urban area would ensure that there is no likelihood of significant effects.		

Step 4 Conclude if the proposed development could result in likely significant effects on a European site

I conclude that the proposed development (alone) would not result in likely significant effects on the River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC (Site Code 002299) and the River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA (Site Code 004232). The site is located within an established urban area, and which is served by suitable foul drainage and surface water drainage systems. The proposed development would have no likely significant effect in combination with other plans and projects on any European site(s). No further assessment is required for the project.

No mitigation measures are required to come to these conclusions.

Appendix 3: Water Framework Directive

Appendix 3: WFD IMPACT ASSESSMENT STAGE 1: SCREENING

Step 1: Nature of the Project, the Site and Locality

An Coimisiún Pleanála ref. no.	ACP-323207-25	Townland, address	Baker Hall, Limekilnhill, Navan, Co. Meath.
Description of project		Development consists of two schools, car parking, play areas, road access and all associated site works on a site to the south of Navan town centre.	
Brief site description, relevant to WFD Screening,		The subject site, with a stated area of 3.3 hectares, contains an irregular shaped area of land located to the west/ north west of the Baker Hall Road and to the east/ south of the Woodlands housing estate, approximately 675m to the south of Navan Market Square. Baker Hall Road provides access to the Baker Hall residential development from Academy Street, a street which diverges from and runs parallel to the Dublin Road. The Boyne River is approximately 135m east of the eastern boundary of the site, though does not adjoin the site due to roads and existing development. The site slopes upwards from east to west and levels out towards the western part of the site. The Baker Hall Road climbs steeply from	

	Academy Street and at a different gradient to the subject site. The subject lands are under grass and undeveloped.
Proposed surface water details	SuDS measures to be used in the engineering and landscaping design.
Proposed water supply source & available capacity	For Navan, including the subject site, for water supply there is 'Capacity Available - LoS improvement required' – dated August 2025.
Proposed wastewater treatment system & available capacity, other issues	For Navan, including the subject site, in terms of wastewater treatment there is a 'Green' indication of available capacity – dated August 2025.
Others?	N/A

Step 2: Identification of relevant water bodies and Step 3: S-P-R connection

Identified water body	Distance to (m)	Water body name(s) (code)	WFD Status	Risk of not achieving WFD Objective e.g.at risk, review, not at risk	Identified pressures on that water body	Pathway linkage to water feature (e.g. surface run-off, drainage, groundwater)
e.g. lake, river, transitional and coastal	Located approximately 135m	Boyne_130 (IE_EA_07B041810)	Moderate	Review	N/A	Surface water run-off, groundwater and drainage.

waters, groundwater body, artificial (e.g. canal) or heavily modified body.	to the north east of the subject site						
	0m	Trim Groundwater (IE_EA_G_002)	Good	Not at Risk	N/A	Groundwater	
Step 4: Detailed description of any component of the development or activity that may cause a risk of not achieving the WFD Objectives having regard to the S-P-R linkage.							
CONSTRUCTION PHASE							
No.	Component	Water body receptor (EPA Code)	Pathway (existing and new)	Potential for impact/ what is the possible impact	Screening Stage Mitigation Measure*	Residual Risk (yes/no) Detail	Determination** to proceed to Stage 2. Is there a risk to the water environment? (if 'screened' in or 'uncertain' proceed to Stage 2.
1.	Site clearance & Construction	Boyne_130 (IE_EA_07B041810)	Indirect impact via Potential hydrological pathway	Water Pollution Surface water run-off	Use of Standard Construction	No	Screen out at this stage.

					Practice and CEMP.		
2.	Site clearance & Construction	Trim Groundwater (IE_EA_G_002)	Indirect impact via Potential hydrological pathway	Water Pollution	Use of Standard Construction Practice and CEMP	No	Screen out at this stage.
OPERATIONAL PHASE							
3.	Surface Water Run-off	Boyne_130 (IE_EA_07B041810)	Indirect impact via Potential hydrological pathway	Water Pollution	SuDS features incorporated into development. Separation of the site from the River Boyne through existing urban development	No	Screen out at this stage.

					including roads.		
4.	Surface Water Run-off	Trim Groundwater (IE_EA_G_002)	Indirect impact via Potential hydrological pathway	Water Pollution	Several SuDS features incorporated into development	No	Screen out at this stage.
DECOMMISSIONING PHASE							
5.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A