



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report PL-500131-GY

Development	Provision of new grass multi-sport playing pitch. This application includes a Natura Impact Statement.
Location	Lemonfield, Oughterard, Co Galway.
Planning Authority	Galway County Council.
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	2461227.
Applicant(s)	Oughterard Sports and Recreational Partnership.
Type of Application	Permission.
Planning Authority Decision	Grant Permission with Conditions.
Type of Appeal	Third Party Normal Planning Appeal.
Appellant(s)	Oughterard Sports and Recreational Partnership.
Observer(s)	None.
Date of Site Inspection	6 th February 2026.
Inspector	C. Daly.

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The subject site, of area 4.55ha, which is relatively flat, consists of two fields. The front field consists of an area of some intact bogland which has been disturbed by peat extraction and which includes bare peat, long and overgrown grasses, large shrubs, regenerating mosses and patchy vegetation with some drains located around the perimeter and some channels within the field. The rear field to the south includes an existing rugby pitch and associated storage container. The site is largely surrounded by hedgerow including on the south-east, south-west, north-east and north-west boundaries and there are mature trees along the front and rear boundaries as well as along the east side boundary.
- 1.2. There is a drainage ditch along the site frontage outside the site boundary and an existing vehicular agricultural access from Pier Road, the L-5334, which is a single lane roadway without footpaths or street lighting in the vicinity of the site. There is a rear access gate to the site from the laneway adjacent to the rugby pitch.
- 1.3. The site is outside the town of Oughterard on a rural road which leads to Oughterard Pier which serves Lough Corrib. The road adjacent to the north-east side boundary and the rear boundary is a narrow laneway in poor condition. The distance from the town edge is c.850m which is also the approximate distance to the local GAA pitches and facilities building in the town.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. The proposed development, in summary, consists of the following:
 - New grass multi-sport playing pitch.
 - Grass amenity areas.
 - Lighting 275 lux to new pitch and lighting 261 lux to existing rugby pitch.
 - Advertising boards, goal posts and ball stop nets to all pitches.
 - Three multi purpose hard surface ball courts.
 - Astro amenity area with fencing.
 - Car parking with 58 spaces and bus parking.

- Facilities building including meeting rooms, toilets, showers, administration and ancillary facilities of 644sqm.
- On site sewerage treatment plant.
- Relocation of existing entrance and new internal access road.
- Three no. pull-in bays along Pier Road to facilitate access.
- The application is accompanied by a Natura Impact Statement. This was revised following a further information request by the Commission.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

Galway County Council initially decided to request further information in relation to:

- traffic matters including auto-track and swept path analysis, details of the passing bay designs including edge protection adjacent to the open channel, details of the priority junction arrangement including for traffic calming measures, the submission of a Stage 1 / 2 Road Safety Audit with recommended measures incorporated;
- an updated NIS to address mechanisms to prevent sediment run-off to infiltrate the Owenriff river and the freshwater pearl mussel;
- a development specific Ecological Impact Assessment report,
- the requirement for a wastewater treatment plant capable of treating a population equivalent of 35;
- an Archaeological Impact Assessment;
- details of the location of the floodlighting columns and profiles and heights of these structures to be detailed;
- and specifications/section through and surface treatment details of the three ball courts and associated boundary fencing, same for the astro area and fencing and the same for the ball stop nets.

Subsequently the P.A. decided to grant permission subject to 18 no. conditions.

Notable conditions include:

- Condition no. 4 requires that the public road and margins incorporating the proposed works adjacent to the LS-5334 and associated works, are to be constructed to the standards and specifications set out in TII Standards and to be agreed in advance with the area engineer.
- Condition no. 5 requires a road safety audit that considers the detailed design drawings and implementation of the recommendations to be incorporated into the final design at the developer's expense and the completion of a stage 3 road safety audit with any safety issues highlighted to be addressed by the developer at their expense.
- Condition no. 6 includes a requirement that the internal road network accord with the detailed requirements of the P.A. and with DMURS, with road gradients not to exceed 1:20.
- Condition no. 8 includes a requirement to liaise with the Council's Active Travel Department to develop and encourage permeability links from Oughterard.
- Condition no. 10 regards standard measures in relation to archaeological monitoring.
- Condition no. 11 requires the mitigation measures set out in Section 6 of the NIS to be carried out in full, the adherence to procedures set out in the Environmental Construction Management Plan, adherence to the Construction Environmental Management Plan and the requirement for an Ecological Clerk of Works to oversee implementation.
- Condition no. 12 requires the implementation of the measures outlined in the Invasive Species Management Plan to eradicate the Montbretia on the site.
- Condition no. 13 confines the hours of operation of the floodlights to between 0900hrs to 2200hrs Monday to Saturday and between 0900hrs and 2100hrs on Sundays and public holidays.

- Condition no. 14 restricts site development and building works to between 0800hrs to 1800hrs Mondays to Fridays and between 0900hrs and 1700hrs on Saturdays and not at all on Sundays and public holidays.
- Condition no. 16 requires external finishes to the facilities per the specifications as indicated on the drawings and the facilities building to be used solely for purposes ancillary to the main sporting activities on the site.
- Condition no. 17 requires no advertising structures to be erected or displayed on the building or within the site unless exempt from planning permission.
- Condition no. 18 requires a detailed landscaping plan to be submitted and agreed with the P.A. prior to commencement.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. Planning Reports

The initial Planner's Report assessment in relation to the adjacent Lough Corrib SAC noted that the construction phase has the potential to result in sedimentation impacts on the Owenriff river within the SAC and which is hydrologically connected to the subject site. It notes that this river contains freshwater pearl mussel, a qualifying interest of the SAC. It noted the mitigation measures proposed in the NIS and considered that these need to be augmented including by silt fencing, stockpiling in excess of 50m from drains and via the use of oil interceptors for parking. It also noted that it was not satisfied with the proposed wastewater treatment unit as it was designed for a PE of 20 when 35 is required.

It noted the submitted Flood Risk Assessment, the location partially within flood zones A and B to the north with coach park and amenity area proposed in this area and not considered vulnerable uses. The new building is proposed in flood zone C and no significant issues are noted in this regard.

The report noted the existing rugby pitch at the southern end of the site which was established following the granting of an exemption certificate (ED 18/52) and the proposed uses were considered compatible with Policy Objective MU 1 and SRA 1 where such amenity facilities are supported.

It noted the comments of the Department in relation to archaeology including the recommendation to carry out an Archaeological Impact Assessment and that F.I.

would be requested. The report noted the location within an area designated as an Iconic Landscape Sensitivity in the Lake Environs Landscape and considered that no adverse impacts would occur from the proposed development.

In relation to the facilities building it noted its single storey form to a height of c.6.2m and that it would assimilate appropriately into the landscape with its compartmentalised form. It noted the screening from the public road and setback by 300m from this road. It was satisfied with the grass surface pitch but in relation to the three ball courts and the lighting it required more detailed drawings. It also noted a requirement for details in relation to soakaway and rainwater tank specification detail. It recommended that F.I. be requested in relation to the items summarised in Section 3.1 above.

The second Planner's Report assessed the information received by way of F.I.. In relation to Item 1(a) it noted detailed drawings were provided in relation to passing bays A, B and C and drainage path details and these measures were agreed with the Council's Roads section; in relation to the kerbing, details were provided in relation to the culverting of the open channel for the length of the passing bay; drawings were provided in relation to the new priority junction layout and traffic calming measures, it noted that at the main junction the radii were increased and a stop sign added. In relation to Item 1(b) it noted a Road Safety Audit was prepared with solutions outlined to the identified problems.

In relation to Item 2, it noted the updated NIS. In relation to Item 3 it noted the submission of a specific Ecological Impact Assessment and the CEMP and the letter from the wastewater systems company that their original recommendation is the most appropriate solution and this was accepted by the Environment section. In relation to Item 4, it noted the submitted Archaeological Impact Assessment and that there is no predicted impact on the cultural heritage assets as a result of the proposed development and that this was acceptable to the Department subject to its recommended conditions.

In relation to Item 5, it noted the details provided for the lighting including for the precise siting of the columns and profiles of the floodlighting structures. In relation to Item 6, it noted the detailed drawings for the three ball courts, the astro area and ball stop nets as well as the fencing and that these meet with the P.A.'s satisfaction. In

relation to AA matters, it noted the updated NIS included an augmented suite of mitigation measures to be employed, the updated information from the wastewater system provider and the additional contents of the CEMP and EclA, it concluded that there would be no likely significant effect on the Natura 2000 sites, alone or in combination.

3.2.2. Other Technical Reports

- Roads and Transportation: Initial report: Further information required in relation to auto track analysis, section drawings, traffic calming and safety audit for alterations to the public road margin. Following F.I., detailed conditions recommended.
- Environment Section: F.I. requested and following F.I., clarification deemed acceptable.

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

- Development Applications Unit: Further information required in relation to the provision of an Archaeological Impact Assessment and conditions recommended in relation to the mitigation measures proposed in the NIS. Second report (August 2025) recommended conditions in relation to archaeological matters.
- The Heritage Council: No response received.
- Inland Fisheries Ireland: No response received.
- An Taisce: No response received.
- Failte Ireland: No response received.

3.4. Third Party Observations

One third party observation was received which can be summarised as follows:

- The previous refusal in relation to a traffic hazard has not been meaningfully addressed.
- The development outside the settlement boundary and in a sensitive landscape designation is not acceptable.

- Issues with the Section 5 declaration issued for the rugby pitch given the traffic hazard and that it could not be screened out for AA.
- The rugby pitch is not a permitted development and is not an established use.
- The access road to the site is prone to flooding.
- Issues in relation to access and traffic safety would create significant traffic hazards and congestion on an unsuitable single lane road.
- The wastewater will degrade the ground water and arterial drains which are connected to Lough Corrib.
- A single house was refused permission at this location on the basis of the location within a special landscape sensitivity rating so the proposed building of larger floor space should be refused permission.

4.0 Planning History

Subject Site

21/1109: Permission refused by the P.A. and on appeal (ABP-312545-22) for new grass multi-sport playing pitch, lighting, three hard surface ball courts, astro amenity areas with fencing, bus and car parking, facilities building, sewerage treatment plant, widening of existing entrance. ABP reason for refusal related to negative impact on the free flow of traffic on the local road given the volume and type of traffic generated and the narrow carriageway which would endanger public safety by reason of a traffic hazard and obstruction of road users.

ED 18/52: Section 5 exemption decided for the construction of a rugby pitch and the demolition of an agricultural shed.

Sites in the Vicinity

12160: Permission refused on appeal by ABP (PL07.240796) for a house and wastewater treatment system. Refusal reasons related to (1) interference with the landscape and (2) noting the soil conditions and land drains on the site with pathways to the Lough Corrib SAC, not satisfied that it would not give rise to a risk of pollution.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 (the CDP)

Volume 1

Oughterard is designated as a Small Growth Town and the site is outside the settlement boundary of the town.

Chapter 6 – Transport and Movement

WC 4 Modern Network of Walking and Cycling Infrastructure

To continue to work and engage with the National Transport Authority, the Department of Transport and other agencies in developing a modern network of walking and cycling infrastructure in the County.

Chapter 8 Tourism & Landscape

- Policy Objective LCM 3 – Landscape Sensitivity Ratings

Consideration of landscape sensitivity ratings shall be an important factor in determining development uses in areas of the County. In areas of high landscape sensitivity, the design and the choice of location of proposed development in the landscape will also be critical considerations.

Per Map 8.2 the subject site is located within an area with landscape sensitivity 4 – iconic (Unique Landscape with high sensitivity to change).

Chapter 10 Natural Heritage, Biodiversity & Green/Blue Infrastructure

- Policy Objective NBH 1 - Natural Heritage and Biodiversity of Designated Sites, Habitats and Species
- Policy Objective NHB 2 - European Sites and Appropriate Assessment
- Policy Objective NHB 3 - Protection of European Sites
- Policy Objective NHB 4 - Ecological Appraisal of Biodiversity
- Policy Objective NHB 5 - Ecological Connectivity and Corridors
- Policy Objective WR 1 - Water Resources

Chapter 11 Community Development & Social Infrastructure

- Policy Objective MU 1 - Multi- Use Community Facilities

Encourage and support the provision and extension of Multi-Use Community Facilities, where feasible, which encourage sharing and integration of community facilities designed for multi-use activities by community groups.

- Policy Objective SRA 1 - Sport, Amenity & Recreation

Support local sports groups and community groups in the development, improvement and expansion of authorised facilities for sporting and recreational needs of all sectors and ages through the reservation of suitable land where available and appropriate.

- SRA 4 Passive and Active Open Space

Seek to develop multifunctional open spaces throughout the County which will support a range of recreational and amenity activities that provides for active and passive needs.

Chapter 14 Climate Change, Energy & Renewable Resource

- Policy Objective FL 1 - Flood Risk Management Guidelines
- Policy Objective FL 3 - Principles of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines
- Policy Objective FL 8 - Flood Risk Assessment for Planning Applications and CFRAMS

Chapter 15 Development Management Standards

- DM Standard 46: Compliance with Landscape Sensitivity Designations

Class 4 – Iconic: Negligible alterations will be allowed only in exceptional circumstances.

- DM Standard 53 – Community Facilities

In assessing planning applications for example leisure facilities, sports grounds, playing fields, play areas, community halls, organisational meeting facilities, medical facilities, childcare facilities and other community orientated developments, regard will be taken of considerations such as:

- *Overall need in terms of existing infrastructural deficit and opportunity for community gain;*
- *Practicalities of site location in terms of relating to uses, impact on local amenities, desirability and accessibility;*
- *The potential multifunctional use of community facilities;*
- *Conformity with the requirements of appropriate legislative guidelines e.g. childcare facilities;*
- *The Planning Authority supports the retention of existing school sites for community use once the existing school has been relocated to an appropriate site. The existing site could be redeveloped as a multi-purpose community centre providing a range of facilities for the local community, including community meeting rooms, youth facilities, games rooms, senior citizens facilities, sports and cultural facilities. The facility should have safe access for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. Safe public parking/bus stop should be provided in close proximity as appropriate.*

Volume 2

8.1 Oughterard Small Growth Town

Section 8.3.3 Community Facilities

OSGT 3 – Community Facilities and Services

To encourage and support the expansion and development of existing facilities and services to meet the needs of the local community.

5.2. Natural Heritage Designations

In relation to designated sites, the subject site is located:

- Across the road from (c.7m south-west of) the Lough Corrib Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (site code 000297).
- c.150m south-west of the Lough Corrib Proposed Natural Heritage Area (PNHA) (site code 000297).
- c.150m south-west of the Lough Corrib Special Protection Area (SPA) (site code 004042).

- c.2.7km north-east of the Oughterard District Bog NHA (site code 002431).
- c.5.3km north-west of the Gortandarragh Limestone Pavement SAC and PNHA (site code 001271).
- c.6.4km north-east of the Connemara Bog Complex SAC (site code 002034).

6.0 The Appeal

6.1. Grounds of Appeal

The grounds of the third party appeal on behalf of Louise Callaghan, Frank and Margaret Kinsella and Lisa Curran can be summarised as follows:

- The single lane road is not suitable given the lack of traffic safety and congestion on the road which will result having negative impacts on the residents and pedestrians who access the lake and their houses.
- The Board's previous reason for refusal has not been addressed.
- The Planner's Report did not address the landscape sensitivity and the hydrological connection between the development and Lough Corrib which is a designated Natura 2000 site.
- The proposal needs to be assessed against the new Development Plan policies.
- The location outside the settlement boundary is not supported and is an ad-hoc extension into the rural area and lands zoned for recreational use in the plan should be targeted for such development. This contravenes policy SP 2 of the Development Plan.
- Per DM Standard 46, negligible alterations will be allowed only in exceptional circumstances within such a sensitive landscape and therefore the significant sporting facility will materially contravene this objective.
- Given that a single house (Reg. Ref. 12160) close by has been refused permission on the grounds of visual amenity then a significant sporting facility should also be refused.

- It is not clear how an exemption certificate was provided for the rugby pitch when it causes a traffic hazard and obstructs road users and where it could not be screened out for AA given the direct hydrological links to the adjacent Natura 2000 sites. The pitch is therefore unauthorized and should be subject to a substitute consent application.
- A development of this nature requires a two-way roadway and the lane serving the pier is not sufficient for existing traffic volumes let alone adding the traffic generated by a development of this scale.
- The expected traffic to be generated at 40 trips per day is not credible given the 58 car parking spaces and bus parking spaces and there will be events and competitions generating significant traffic volumes on the road. The single lane road with pull-in bays will not be sufficient for this.
- It is not clear that the applicant has obtained landowner consent for the three pull-in bays. If permission is granted without these being provided, then residents along the road will not be able to leave their homes.
- There are no proposals included to alleviate flooding along the public road which floods periodically (see the FRA and SFRA) and submitted photo of road closed due to flooding in 2015.
- The waters of the lake will be degraded by the wastewater treatment plant, leaking petrochemicals from vehicles, contaminated run-off from building works and the use of fertiliser on playing pitches on lands prone to flooding.
- There would be a lasting impact on wildlife in the area as it will result in the destruction of habitat and displacement of wildlife including the Irish hare and bat species observed on the site.
- The floodlighting will displace bat species from the area and degrade the habitat.
- There are no measures proposed to protect the above species.

6.2. Applicant Response

The response to the third party appeal on behalf of the applicant can be summarised as follows:

- Three of the four appellants do not permanently reside on Pier Road.
- The development would be used by the Oughterard Rugby Football Club, the ladies GAA, local scouting and angling clubs, the local youth services group and the local cruise company for parking tour buses and letters of support were included in the application.
- Many other sporting clubs have developed facilities outside settlement boundaries including Oughterard soccer, Furbo soccer and GAA clubs, Killanin GAA club, Salthill Devon soccer club and Clarinbridge-Claregalway GAA club with other precedents noted outside Galway.
- Finding a site in excess of 4.55 hectares would be difficult to secure in urban areas.
- Policy objectives SRA 1 and SRA 4 would be supported by the development as it would strengthen community facilities for all ages.
- The development is within walking distance of the town and there are no other sites of this size within the town.
- The use of this location optimises the potential for compact growth directing such intense development to serviced areas of the town.
- Sports pitches and facilities are a consistent intervention into the landscape character of rural areas in the county which are mostly unzoned.
- The allegations regarding the existing pitch are not relevant to the consideration of this application.
- The traffic generated would be equivalent to that generated by 6 dwelling units. The worst case scenario of 100 traffic movements would occur twice a year and is modest. Many adult visiting teams would travel by bus.
- There are two existing passing bays along the pier road with plans to upgrade one of these and construct a new one at the bridge and there will be a bay at the front of the site. Letters of consent were provided.
- This is supported by TII publication: Rural Link Road Design (2017) where it states on local roads with a width of less than 5.3m, it may be appropriate to provide passing bays instead of full carriageway widening.

- The car parking provision accords with CDP policy.
- The traffic volumes are so small at 40AADT as not to hinder emergency vehicles at the pier. Traffic management has been discussed with the Roads Authority.
- The coach park and amenity area proposed to the north of the site within Flood Zones A and B would be water compatible. The rest of the site for other parts of the development would be within zone C and the facilities building and sewage treatment unit would be on existing ground above the highest flood levels and to the rear of the site where the ground is good.
- Water management measures are included to prevent the development resulting in flooding elsewhere.
- The wastewater treatment system is acceptable in terms of quantity and quality and will not create adverse impacts.
- In relation to visual amenity, the majority of the development is low lying with the building and the treatment unit at the rear of the site with limited visibility. The nearest dwelling would be 190m from the nearest site boundary.
- The ECIA includes a bat survey with no evidence of roosting bats in the area. The light plan takes cognisance of bat flight paths and there will be no overspill.
- The impact on nature and biodiversity has been thoroughly assessed in the NIS with impacts shown to be acceptable.

6.3. Further Information

On 12th February 2026, the Commission decided to issue a request for further information under Section 132 of the 2000 Act. This included a request to provide the Natura Impact Statement prepared in 2021 by MKO planning and environmental consultants. The request noted that the surveys associated with the 2021 NIS were undertaken in 2019 and it requested an up to date NIS based on up to date survey data having regard to changes to the qualifying interests of relevant European sites since the original assessment.

The request also stated that regard should be had to the likely significant effects or potential adverse effects from the proposed works, including the works to the existing roadside boundary including the removal of vegetation and alterations to drains along the site frontage.

The applicant responded to the F.I. request on the 11th May 2026. The response included the 2021 Natura Impact Statement prepared by MKO and an NIS dated May 2026 prepared by Aster Environmental Consultants Ltd.

6.4. Response of the Parties

Following the receipt of the applicant's response, the Commission circulated this to the parties on 15th May 2026 and requested the applicant to publish and put up revised public notices.

One third party response was received from Lisa Curran and Denis Curran which can be summarised as follows:

- They are not satisfied that the proposed development would not, either individually or cumulatively, adversely affect the integrity of the European sites.
- Insufficient consideration has been given to the interaction of the proposed development and the existing pressures on the Lough Corrib catchment which arises from agricultural activities, improved grasslands and wastewater discharges.
- There has been a failure to assess the cumulative effects from the long-term operation and maintenance of the proposed sports complex.
- Reiterates concerns for the existing rugby pitch and screening for Appropriate Assessment and the uncertainty regarding the environmental baseline which includes development whose effects may not have been assessed.
- It is not clear that the revised NIS cumulatively assesses the effects of the existing rugby pitch and the proposed development.
- As they have witnessed flooding along the proposed access road they are not satisfied that the conclusions of the revised NIS regarding hydrological connectivity and cumulative impacts are supported by evidence.

- The revised NIS does not assess the implications of flood events, elevated groundwater levels or drainage connectivity on the long-term performance of the proposed WWTS and in relation to potential failure of the WWTS.
- The finding that the hydrological pathway between the site and Lough Corrib is indirect and attenuated does not reflect the ground conditions.
- Insufficient consideration has been given to the interaction between increased run-off volumes, flood events, wastewater treatment infrastructure, surface water pathways and existing nutrient pressures.
- How can the Commission be satisfied that all pathways giving rise to adverse effects on the European sites have been excluded. They are not satisfied that the revised NIS has demonstrated that flood-related pathways to the European sites can be excluded.
- The revised NIS does not include a detailed assessment of the likely nutrient loading from the maintenance of the playing pitches or assess its mobilisation during periods of heavy rainfall or flooding.
- The revised NIS fails to show how nutrient inputs may interact cumulatively with existing nutrient pressures and cumulative impacts have not been adequately assessed.
- Insufficient consideration has been given to the cumulative effects associated with increased recreational activity, traffic generation, flood lighting, noise and disturbance.
- They are concerned about the potential impacts of floodlighting including light spill into adjacent habitats and disturbance of protected bat species and other fauna associated with the Owenriff River corridor and the Lough Corrib SAC and SPA.
- Their concerns are not just related to ecological matters and they continue to rely on all the grounds raised in the original appeal.
- Permission should be refused.

7.0 **Assessment**

7.1. Having examined the application details and all other documentation on file, including all of the submissions received in relation to the appeal, the reports of the local authority, and having inspected the site, and having regard to the relevant local/regional/national policies and guidance, I consider that the substantive issues in this appeal to be considered are as follows:

- Principle of Development
- Access and Traffic
- Visual Amenity
- Flood Risk
- Wastewater Treatment
- Ecology
- Other Matters

Appropriate Assessment is addressed separately in section 9.0 below.

7.2. **Principle of Development**

- 7.2.1. I note the appellant's arguments in relation to the location of the development outside the zoned areas of the town and in relation to policy on compact development. I note the location of the site c.810m from the edge of Oughterard and c.80m from the settlement boundary of the town at its closest point. I note the proposed development includes a new grass multi-sport playing pitch, grass amenity areas, flood lighting, astro amenity area, facilities building, car parking for 58 spaces and bus parking as well as a relocated entrance and other related works in addition to the existing rugby pitch at the rear of the site. I note the facility is proposed, in the main as a rugby ground, to predominantly serve under 12s as well as teenage rugby training and teams in addition to other local recreation and sports clubs which have written letters of support included with the application.
- 7.2.2. The appeal response has noted that the site is within walking distance of the town and it has cited a number of examples of sports facilities and pitches being located outside urban settlements. I note that the amenity zoned lands within the town are

within Flood Zones A and B per the Oughterard Flood Risk Map. I agree with the Inspector in the previous case that it is not necessary that a sports and recreational facility be located within an urban area, although there is the GAA club grounds within the town boundary, or on lands zoned for such purposes.

- 7.2.3. I note this particularly in the context of the absence of appropriately zoned lands in the town and in relation to the policy on compact development noting that the proposed land use is not intensive and requires a relatively large area of land (in an urban context) as advised in the appeal response. I do not consider that strategic settlement policies or other strategic policies of the CDP would be contravened in this regard.
- 7.2.4. Specifically, I note the community gain that would result and consistency with CDP Policy Objective MU 1 (Multi-Use Community Facilities), Policy Objective SRA 1 (Sport, Amenity and Recreation), Policy Objective SRA 4 (Passive and Active Open Space), DM Standard 53 (Community Facilities) of Volume 1 and Policy OSGT 3 (Community Facilities and Services) of Volume 2 of the CDP. I also note my assessment in relation to impact on the landscape and visual amenity further below.
- 7.2.5. I note the location within what I consider is a reasonable distance of the town and that patronage of the facilities would be drawn from both the rural hinterland and the urban area of Oughterard. On balance, noting the CDP policies which encourage such facilities and the difficulties with finding a suitable urban site for the development, I consider the location and proposed development of the site acceptable in principle.

7.3. Access and Traffic

- 7.3.1. I note the appeal has stated that the previous reason for refusal by the Board has not been addressed in the subject application. This reason for refusal noted that the previous development would negatively impact on the free flow of traffic on the local road given the volume and type of traffic generated and the narrow carriageway width and that it would endanger public safety by reason of a traffic hazard and obstruction of road users. In that case, the Board cited that it did not accept the Inspector's recommendation to grant permission and that it concurred with the P.A. that it would endanger public safety by reason of a traffic hazard given the distance

from the town on a narrow road and the uncertainty in relation to the provision of passing bays.

- 7.3.2. I note that a new vehicular access to the development is proposed along Pier Road. This local road terminates at Oughterard Pier to the north-east and leads to the town edge where it joins the N59 to the south-west. I note the existing carriageway width at the proposed entrance is c.4.2m wide and that the road narrows somewhat further to c.3.7m to the north-east. I also note two existing passing bays to the south-west along Pier Road. On my site visit I noted the speed limit of 50kph along Pier Road in the vicinity of the site, the low vehicle speeds along the road and that this and the passing bays allowed for vehicles using the road to pass safely. I also note that the road serves Oughterard Pier at its north-east end, 16 dwellings (11 to the north-east) and various agricultural lands.
- 7.3.3. The applicant's planning report notes that at a meeting with the Council's Road Section that *"it was agreed that a lengthening of the existing passing bay at Corribdale (Passing Bay A Figure 1) to 25m, the construction of a new 25m passing bay at Keoghs (Passing Bay 2 Figure 1) and the widening of the full extent of the front of the existing site would be in principle enough to satisfy the concerns of the Council reasons for previous refusal"*. I note that the design includes two passing bay areas (one new and one to be extended) along the local road to the south-west and one area for pulling in at the front of the site (point C).
- 7.3.4. I note landowner consent letters have been submitted for the passing bays and these have been included in the red line areas such that I have no concerns in this regard. In my opinion the road alignment leading to the site from Oughterard, when combined with the proposed passing bays/upgrades, presents good forward visibility with the existing passing bays and this would avoid vehicles having to reverse along the road to facilitate the passage of other vehicles.
- 7.3.5. I note the F.I. report prepared by Alan Lipscombe Traffic and Transport Consultants details enhanced safety and design measures requested by the P.A.. I note that in relation to the subject proposal, that following F.I., the Council's Roads and Transportation section had no objection subject to recommended conditions. This followed the submission of details that included road safety audit measures incorporated into the design and alterations to the roadside margin. I also note the

proposed setback of the front of the site and that sightlines would be more than adequate at 100m in both directions from a 2.4m setback.

- 7.3.6. I note the proposal for 58 no. car parking spaces and bus parking provision. I note the appeal response notes that the average annual daily traffic would be 40 movements and that there would be rugby blitzes twice yearly in the autumn and spring where the number of movements would peak at 100. It notes that while club members would largely attend by car, that visiting teams would attend by mini-bus. I note the Table of Projected Traffic Volumes to the Development in the submitted planning report prepared by SUCA Consulting Engineers which provides further detail in relation to the intended use and trips.
- 7.3.7. I note that the peak use of the site would largely be outside peak summer season when trips to the pier would be at their height as the submitted documentation notes the autumn and spring peaks as the rugby season occurs outside of summer time. Noting that it would be a multi-sport facility, I note the non-rugby element would be ancillary such that I consider the trip number estimates to and from the site produced by the applicant to be reasonable notwithstanding the appellant's assertions.
- 7.3.8. I note that the appeal response references the TII publication: Rural Link Road Design (2017) where it allows for passing bays to be provided in lieu of full carriageway widening on local roads where the carriageway width is below 5.3m. Noting the proposed passing bay upgrades and other safety measures incorporated into the development for the Road Safety Audit, I am satisfied that the applicant in the application and the F.I. response has adequately addressed the Board's previous refusal reason.
- 7.3.9. I consider that the local road, the L-5334, would have adequate capacity to cater for the likely increase in movements to and from the site and in the use of the road. I note this in the context of the proposed safety upgrades, the good road surface condition and that the increase in trip levels would mainly occur during off peak times, i.e. during evening and weekend times. In my opinion, the flow of traffic on Pier Road would not result in obstructions for road users as a result of the proposed development.
- 7.3.10. Based on this, I am satisfied that road safety issues for the proposed development have been addressed and, should permission be granted, I recommend that the

Council's Roads and Transportation section's conditions be applied. These conditions also require final details to be agreed including the undertaking of a Stage 3 RSA.

- 7.3.11. I note the P.A. included a condition requiring liaison with the Council's Active Travel Section to facilitate permeability links in accordance with Objective WC4 of the CDP. Based on the aspirational nature of this development plan objective, the private ownership of surrounding lands and the open-ended nature of the condition, I do not consider such a condition to be appropriate in this case.

7.4. Visual Amenity

- 7.4.1. I note the appellant has raised concerns in relation to visual amenity. I note the existing rugby pitch at the rear of the site at a somewhat lower ground level blends into the rural landscape and is largely screened from surrounding sites by the mature trees to the front and rear of the site and by the trees and hedgerow along the side boundaries of the site. I note the site is located within a landscape designated at sensitivity 4 level – iconic (Unique Landscape with high sensitivity to change).
- 7.4.2. I note that the 644sqm facilities building, to the front of the existing rugby pitch, with three pitched roof elements to height 8.248m, as part of the wider proposal, would be located c.330m to the rear of the site where I note there would be limited visibility from the public domain. I note that it and the other structures proposed on the site, which is not elevated and which is somewhat less elevated towards the rear, would include fencing.
- 7.4.3. There would also be netting of heights 6m to 12m, advertising structures, a large multi-use pitch and modest sized astro area. When combined with the grassed amenity area to the north of the multi-sports pitch I consider that it would not be unduly visually obtrusive when viewed from outside the site in the rural landscape where such facilities are often located. In this context, in my opinion the P.A. condition restricting the proposed advertising on the site is therefore not warranted.
- 7.4.4. When viewed from within the site, I note that the character of the landscape would be changed in the front and mid field areas and around the main building, which area includes disturbed bogland with patchy vegetation, grasses, mosses and scrub. I consider this change in the character of the site, which would largely not be visible

outside the site, to be justified noting CDP policy which encourages such facilities and this would not be significantly negative.

- 7.4.5. I note the three smaller multi-use courts towards the front/northern end of the site would be screened by the landscaping scheme proposed in the vicinity of the roadside entrance, and would not in my opinion be unduly visible from the public realm. I note the floodlight poles of 15m and 18m heights, would be visible from outside the site in respect of the new multi-sports pitch but not in relation to the lights for the existing rear rugby pitch, particularly when lit up. In my opinion the flood lights for the multi-sports pitch would be unduly out of character with the rural area and sensitive landscape. Should permission be granted, I recommend that these elements be omitted by condition.
- 7.4.6. I note the existing boundaries which consist of mature hedgerow, other than the alterations to the front roadside boundary, would be largely unaffected by the proposed development. I also note that the landscaping plan provides for areas of native planting on the site. This would be mainly located in the vicinity of the front boundary, the central car park and to the side of the new building. In my opinion, this would further aid in setting the development, other than the floodlights for the multi-sports pitch, within the wider rural landscape in an acceptable manner.
- 7.4.7. However, I note that per DM Standard 46 for Class 4 Landscape, “*negligible alterations will be allowed only in exceptional circumstances*”. While noting that I consider the proposed development, excluding the floodlights, would have an acceptable visual impact outside the site, I do not consider that the alterations proposed to the site can be considered to be negligible alterations and I note no exceptional circumstances. In this context, I consider that a material contravention of DM Standard 46 would arise.
- 7.4.8. I note that in this circumstance per Section 37(2)(a) of the 2000 Act (as amended), the Commission nevertheless has the power to grant permission. I consider there to be a planning rationale to do so given that in my opinion the visual impact on the receiving landscape outside the site, in the absence of the proposed floodlights for the multi-sports pitch, would be modest noting the location of the site on the periphery of a Small Growth Town, the limited visibility of the development from outside the site and that such community/sporting facilities are supported by CDP

policies. On balance, while noting the changes to the character of the site proposed which would mainly only be visible inside the site, I consider the proposed material contravention of the plan in this instance to be justified.

- 7.4.9. I note the appellant raises the previous refusal of permission for a house adjacent to the site to the east in relation to visual impact and that a building of greater size is proposed in this instance. I note a significant difference in that the cited house refusal would have been located close to a public road to the east while the building in this instance would be located c.330m back from the public road on a relatively flat and well screened site such I consider there to be no significant inconsistency with the cited refusal of permission to the east and which took place under a different development plan

7.5. Flood Risk

- 7.5.1. I note the appellant has raised concerns in relation to flood risk including that the Pier Road floods periodically. Per the OPW flood risk maps, I note that the northern portion of the site where the car park, access and amenity facilities (three ball courts and part of the grassed amenity area) would be located is within Flood Zones A and B and that the remainder of the site is located within Flood Zone C. This is confirmed in the submitted Preliminary Assessment of Flood Risks report prepared by Hydro-S Engineering Hydrology Consultants Ltd.
- 7.5.2. The report notes that pluvial flooding and fluvial flood risk from the drains are relevant. It notes that *“water management measures are required to avoid the development causing or exacerbating flood risks elsewhere”* and that *“any surface runoff from the proposed development should not be discharged into these drains as that could increase the peak flow level of the drain”*. In relation to the on-site wastewater treatment system, it notes that this is required to have its top level higher than the flood levels and the polishing filter would have to include unsaturated depth above the flood levels.
- 7.5.3. The report concludes by noting that only the coach park and amenity area would be located within flood zones A and B and that these are water compatible developments and that the development is feasible subject to the measures to avoid causing flood risk or exacerbating flood risk elsewhere. Having reviewed this report

and the relevant flood risk maps, I consider its findings to be reasonable and consistent with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines (2009).

- 7.5.4. In relation to the flooding of the public access road raised in the appeal, noting the submitted FRA, in my opinion this would not be exacerbated by the proposed development such that I am satisfied that no significant issue would arise.
- 7.5.5. I note the submitted Soakaway and Rainwater Harvesting Calculations prepared by SUCA Civil and Construction Engineers. I note this outlines the soakaway design is to accord with BRE Digest 365. This is designed to cater for the construction of the facilities building and I note the proposed development on the remainder of the site (total site area 4.55ha) would be permeable to the ground. I note that the initial Planner's Report noted that in relation to the soakaway, the Council's environment section raised no objection.
- 7.5.6. In relation to the appellant's assertion that the ground conditions suggest that the hydrological pathway from the site to Lough Corrib is not attenuated and is direct, I have reviewed the mapping that relates to waterbodies on and in the vicinity of the site and I am satisfied that any potential pathway is indirect and, in effect, would attenuate water flow to some degree noting the absence of streams or rivers flowing directly from the site to Lough Corrib. I do not consider that flood risk would be a significant risk in this regard noting the proposed drainage measures to be employed and the flood risk assessment.
- 7.5.7. I note that DM Standard 67 provides for attenuation tanks to be used in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Council. I note the applicant's approach was acceptable to the P.A. I note that the attenuation tank relate to a relatively small portion of the site, the building footprint only. Subject to a standard drainage condition for detailed agreement with the P.A., I am satisfied that this would accord with CDP policy in relation to drainage matters noting that the building footprint would be exceptionally small relative to the site and the surface water drainage requirements.
- 7.5.8. Noting the ground conditions on the site, I do not consider that DM Standard 67 would be materially contravened. I am satisfied that there would be no significant interaction between surface water drainage, the WWTS, water levels on the site and

flood events given the conditions I have recommended in his report in relation to these matters.

7.6. Wastewater Treatment

- 7.6.1. I note the appellants have raised concerns in relation to impacts on water quality on the site and via hydrological connections to Lough Corrib SAC and SPA. I note that the WWTS and polishing filter would be located north of the existing rugby pitch outside of flood zones A and B and that per the submitted Site Characterisation Form, the aquifer category is locally important with high vulnerability. The groundwater protection response is noted to be R1. I note that it states that the system would be designed for a population (membership) of 80 but to allow for future expansion of membership to 120 which is used for the system design. Further information was requested by the P.A. in relation to this matter as a PE of 20 was calculated based on a BOD figure of 2120g when a PE of 35 is required.
- 7.6.2. A letter from the wastewater system provider noted the hydraulic and organic loading calculations and that the system, with modifications is designed to cater for the organic load, could be run efficiently with no requirement for an upgrade. It noted the organic loading provides for a PE of 35 (2120 g BOD/d at 60g BOD/person.day) and that the hydraulic loading provides for a PE of 17 (2900 L/d at 180 l/person.day). I note following F.I. that the Council's Environment Section reviewed this response and had no objection to the proposal. Having reviewed the 1999 EPA Wastewater Treatment Manuals – Treatment Systems for Small Communities, Business, Leisure Centres and Hotels, I am satisfied that the system capacity would be adequate for a development of this type.
- 7.6.3. I note that per the trial hole tests, bedrock was encountered at 0.7m and the water table was not encountered. Clay soil was noted above the bedrock. Following testing a surface percolation value of 13.6 was noted. Based on this a secondary treatment system and soil polishing filter was recommended. The proposal is for the soil polishing filter to be a minimum of 0.5m above ground level to achieve the minimum 1.2m separation distance required.
- 7.6.4. I note per the EPA Code of Practice (2021), per Table 6.2 thereof minimum separation distances would be satisfied. Per Table 6.3 the minimum depth of 1.2m would be achieved and that per Table 6.4 a secondary treatment system and soil

polishing filter would be appropriate based on the percolation values noted. I note the appeal concerns in relation to flooding. I note that the FRA stated that the polishing filter would have to include an unsaturated depth above the flood levels.

- 7.6.5. I note that the system would be located outside flood zones A and B. Noting this, should permission be granted, I recommend a condition for the final level details of the WWTS be agreed with the P.A. consistent with the EPA Code of Practice prior to commencement of development. I am therefore satisfied that the wastewater treatment system would accord with the EPA Codes, with CDP policy and would not give rise to a significant risk of pollution.

7.7. Ecology

- 7.7.1. The appeal has raised concerns in relation to pollution from the site including from the wastewater treatment system and from the petrochemicals from vehicles using the site which could impact negatively on the water quality of the Owenriff River which leads to the Lough Corrib SAC and SPA. I consider these matters in Sections 9 and 10 below.
- 7.7.2. I note that the appellant has raised concerns in relation to lasting impacts on wildlife in the area suggesting that destruction of habitat and displacement of wildlife including the Irish hare and bat species will result and that the floodlighting will displace the bats on the site. I note the submitted Supplementary Ecological Impact Assessment (ECIA) prepared by Aster Environmental Consultants Ltd in relation to the passing points.
- 7.7.3. I note that based on this report and the previous ECIA, a bat survey was previously carried out with the trees and shed on the site noted to have negligible to low roosting potential and no evidence, such as droppings or fur oil staining, of roosting bats was found. Given the low roosting potential noted (also noted in the Inspector's Report for ABP-312545-22), and noting the bat survey from the 2021 MKOS report, I concur with the ECIA reports that no significant issues would arise in relation to bats. I note this in the context of no significant changes to the trees and shed on the site in the interim.
- 7.7.4. I note the supplementary ECIA report refers to the "*areas of formerly intact raised or blanket bog that have been disturbed by peat extraction*" in the northern portion of

the site and which features “*patchy vegetation, bare peat, and regenerating mosses, grasses, or shrubs*” which is consistent with my observations from my site visit.

- 7.7.5. The ECIA notes the possibility of spawning for the common frog to be a possibility in the drainage ditches located along the northern roadside boundary and adjacent to passing points A and B. It notes that freshwater pearl mussel, salmon, brown trout, sea lamprey and other fish species such as bream may occur within 200m of the passing bays.
- 7.7.6. It notes the potential for impact on Lough Corrib and its protected areas and nationally important aquatic species due to the entry of silt, sediment, hydrocarbons and cement into the watercourses. No significant impacts are identified with the application of the mitigation measures outlined in Table 10 including construction management measures. I also note the mitigation measures outlined in Section 8.0 of the revised NIS including measures in relation to silt control for the drains and in relation to water flow management during and post construction as well as the application of best practice construction measures.
- 7.7.7. I note that the P.A. decision condition no. 4 included a requirement for the proposed road works and passing bay works, including road margins, to comply with the TII standards and to be agreed in advance with the P.A.. Should permission be granted, I recommend a similar condition to ensure the relevant standards are applied and that no significant impact on the roadside stream/channel occurs.
- 7.7.8. I note that there appears to be limited consideration in the reports in relation to the removal of the northern roadside boundary of length c.107m. I note the length of roadside trees and hedgerow proposed for removal. This includes meadowsweet, bird vetch, gorse, Yorkshire fog, valerian, brambles, creeping buttercup, lesser knapweed, silverweed, iris, and alder. I note that the proposed landscape plan includes significant new tree planting inside the proposed access. This is subject to the mitigation measures identified in the revised NIS (considered further below).
- 7.7.9. Considering the proposed new native planting scheme which would be behind the current roadside boundary, I consider that this would provide new planting of ecological value while also allowing for the proposed new entrance where some loss of established ecology would necessarily be expected. The existing hedgerow

would, in my opinion, be of value to the landscape and is of ecological value and its loss is regrettable.

- 7.7.10. However, I consider this to be a reasonable and balanced approach to enable the proposed development to proceed noting my above and below assessment in relation to the policy merits of the proposed development and in relation to my visual impact/landscape assessment. I therefore have no significant ecological concerns in relation to the loss of the existing roadside boundary including the trees.
- 7.7.11. I note that surveys were conducted in relation to habitat, invasive species, birds and mammals. The bird, mammal, invasive species and habitat surveys were undertaken in June and November 2024 within the optimal periods recommended. I note that per the revised NIS, additional field surveys were undertaken in March, April and May 2026. I note brown hare were recorded on the site during the May 2026 survey per the revised NIS. It noted *“this confirmed their presence within the wider area” and that “the site provides low value, occasional foraging habitat only”*. In this context, I do not consider that the population of brown hare in the area would be unduly affected.
- 7.7.12. Key ecological receptors relevant to the site and development were identified and I note that these were the Lough Corrib SAC, SPA, PNHA and nationally important aquatic species. I note that no significant cumulative impacts of significance and no significant residual impacts were identified in the reports. I note that with mitigation measures, no significant impacts were noted in the ECIA and NIS reports on aquatic species or on Lough Corrib SAC and SPA. It also notes that no significant impacts were identified on terrestrial biodiversity notwithstanding the concerns of the appellants in this regard. I concur with these conclusions which I consider to be reasonable, evidenced and based on expert ecological opinion.
- 7.7.13. I note the report submitted prepared by Signify in relation to the lighting which would be for the pitches on the site. This shows the flood lights are designed as direction lighting with very limited overspill. This is stated to take into account bat flight paths in the applicant’s appeal response. Noting this and the previous bat survey, I consider that no significant issues in relation to impacts on bats would arise in this regard. If the Commission are minded to grant permission in respect of the proposed floodlighting, I recommend a standard lighting condition be applied.

7.7.14. I note the submitted Invasive Species Management Plan report prepared by Aster Environmental Consultants Ltd. This relates to the Montbretia found on the site. I consider that careful management and containment measures are required to prevent these species spreading and, consistent with this plan, I recommend an on-site containment and disposal strategy. Should permission be granted, I recommend this be required by condition.

7.8. Other Matters

- 7.8.1. I note that the cumulative impact of the proposed development, including the existing rugby pitch, has been assessed in this report. I note that the existing rugby pitch is noted to form part of the baseline of the ecology of the site for the purposes of the revised NIS and that the modest works undertaken to construct it are outlined in the revised NIS which I consider would have no significant impact on the environmental baseline.
- 7.8.2. In relation to the robustness of the revised NIS conclusions in relation to hydrological connections and flood risk, I note the flood risk assessment above gives rise to no significant concerns notwithstanding the assertions of the appellants. I also note that the proposed wastewater system would accord with the EPA Code of Practice as required such that I have no significant concerns. I note the WWTS close to the existing rugby pitch would be outside of any flood risk zone and can be conditioned to ensure its level is above the level of any flooding.
- 7.8.3. In relation to potential pollution to waters from nutrient run-off from the pitches on the site, I note that the revised NIS states that no chemicals would be used with natural processes such as the addition of seaweed to pitches proposed instead. Noting this, I do not consider there to be a significant risk of nutrient run-off from the proposed development.
- 7.8.4. In relation to potential disturbance and loss of residential amenity from the proposed development, I have noted no significant concerns in relation to traffic generation and flood lighting that cannot be dealt with by condition. In relation to noise and recreational activities on the site, I have noted the seasonal nature of the activities on the site and I note that it would be located outside of a residential area. Nevertheless, noting that there are a number of dwellings in the vicinity of the subject site, should permission be granted I recommend the inclusion of a standard noise

condition to ensure excessive noise from the facilities building is avoided and local amenity is appropriately protected.

- 7.8.5. I note that the appeal has suggested that the existing rugby pitch cannot avail of the Section 5 exemption issued by the Council given that it would result in a traffic hazard and that it cannot be screened out for Appropriate Assessment. I note that the declaration was not subject to referral to the Commission or further challenge. I note that the rugby pitch has not been applied for per the public notices as part of the subject application. I have assessed the proposed development, including the floodlighting and associated works for the rugby pitch, and I note that the rugby pitch was declared exempted and that the pitch itself is not in scope.
- 7.8.6. In relation to archaeological matters, I note that following F.I. where an Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) was submitted that the P.A. accepted that, given no impacts were predicted on the identified cultural heritage assets, that any issues that may arise could be dealt with by condition. This was based on noting that development in the peatland area would be on top of the existing ground with no ground disturbance proposed.
- 7.8.7. However, I note that at least some groundworks would be required and I note that the Development Applications Unit, following F.I., recommended that permission could be granted subject to its conditions. Based on this and noting the strong legal protection in relation to works that could impact in this area, I am satisfied that should permission be granted, the conditions recommended by the Department would ensure no undue impacts could arise in this regard.
- 7.8.8. I note also that the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) submitted at F.I. stage incorporates the recommendations from the AIA. Should permission be granted, I recommend conditions be applied to ensure the recommendations of these reports are implemented.
- 7.8.9. In relation to water supply, I note the submitted pre-connection enquiry form from Uisce Éireann which notes a water connection is feasible without infrastructure upgrade. Should permission be granted, I recommend a standard condition in relation to same.
- 7.8.10. The planning authority did not attach a condition requiring the payment of development contributions. I note that while the Galway Co. Co. Development

Contribution Scheme 2016, (as updated), provides for the payment of contributions in respect of (inter alia) *Recreational Buildings* and *Recreational Facility/Sports Clubs*, there is an exemption available in respect of Community based Recreational Facility/Sports Club. I therefore do not recommend the attachment of a development contribution condition in the event of a decision to grant permission.

8.0 EIA Screening

- 8.1. The proposed development has been subject to preliminary examination for environmental impact assessment (refer to Form 1 and Form 2 in Appendices of this report). Having regard to the characteristics and location of the proposed development and the types and characteristics of the potential impacts, it is considered that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment. The proposed development, therefore, does not trigger a requirement for environmental impact assessment screening and an EIAR is not required.

9.0 Appropriate Assessment

AA Screening

- 9.1. In accordance with Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and on the basis of the information considered in this AA screening (see details in Appendix 3), I conclude that it is not possible to exclude that the proposed development alone or in combination with other plans and projects will give rise to significant effects on Lough Corrib SAC and Lough Corrib SPA European Sites in view of the sites conservation objectives. Appropriate Assessment is required.
- 9.2. This determination is based on:
- The potential water-based connection route from the land drains on the site via the Owenriff River to the European sites.
 - The potential for negative impacts on water quality via sedimentation and/or release of hydrocarbons which water quality could degrade habitat and negatively impact on the qualifying interests of the SAC and SPA.
 - The potential for invasive species to be transmitted to the SAC and SPA.

AA Conclusion: Integrity Test

- 9.3. In screening the need for Appropriate Assessment (see details in Appendix 3), it was determined that the proposed development could result in significant effects on the Lough Corrib SAC and the Lough Corrib SPA in view of the conservation objectives of those sites and that Appropriate Assessment under the provisions of S177U was required.
- 9.4. Following an examination, analysis and evaluation of the revised NIS (see Appendix 4), all associated material submitted and taking into account observations of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, I consider that adverse effects on site integrity of the Lough Corrib SAC and Lough Corrib SPA can be excluded in view of the conservation objectives of these sites and that no reasonable scientific doubt remains as to the absence of such effects.
- 9.5. My conclusion is based on the following:
- Detailed assessment of construction and operational impacts.
 - The mitigation measures provided to prevent sediment run-off or emission of pollutants or untreated surface water from the site into water bodies linked to the European sites.
 - The proposed development will not affect the attainment of conservation objectives for Lough Corrib SAC and Lough Corrib SPA or prevent or delay the restoration of favourable conservation condition associated with the conservation objectives for these sites.
 - The effectiveness of mitigation measures proposed and adoption of the Construction Environmental Management Plan.
 - Application of planning conditions to require the implementation to the mitigation measures outlined in the revised NIS.

10.0 Water Framework Directive

- 10.1. I note the concerns of the appellant, including in response to the revised NIS, that insufficient consideration has been given to the interaction of the proposed development and the existing pressures on the Lough Corrib catchment. I note that

the relevant water bodies must be improved to at least good ecological status per the requirements of the Water Framework Directive. I have carried out a screening assessment in Appendix 5 in relation to impacts related to the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.

- 10.2. Noting the surface water drainage design measures, the best practice construction measures outlined in the CEMP, the mitigation measures proposed in the revised NIS in relation to water based emissions from the site and proposed connection to the public water network, I have concluded that it can be ruled out that the proposed development will pose a risk to surface and ground water bodies.
- 10.3. Given the position above the Maam-Clonbur groundwater body (code IE_WE_G_0006) noted to be of “good” status, the c.7m distance from the Owenriff (Corrib)_020 (Code IE_WE_30O020200) river waterbody noted to be of “poor” status and the c.150m distance from the Corrib Upper lake waterbody (Code IE_WE_30_666b) noted to be of “good” status, I consider that the proposed development would not prevent the future attainment/maintenance of a ‘Good’ water status and would not result in the deterioration of existing water quality of the above named waterbodies. The proposed development would therefore be consistent with the Water Framework Directive. Accordingly, I note no significant water related issues in this regard.

11.0 Recommendation

- 11.1. I recommend that permission be granted subject to conditions.

12.0 Reasons and Considerations

- 12.1. Having regard to the provisions of the Galway County Development Plan 2022 – 2028, the location of the appeal site in a rural area and proximate to the settlement boundary of Oughterard and within walking distance of the town, the absence of appropriately zoned lands in the town, the nature, scale and design of the proposed sports related development and to the nature of adjoining Pier Road and the passing-bay upgrades proposed, it is considered that, subject to compliance with the conditions set out below, the proposed development would not seriously impact on

the residential or visual amenities of the area, the local landscape character, the quality of local waters and would not result in the creation of a traffic hazard.

- 12.2. Notwithstanding the location of the site within an area identified as a Class 4 iconic landscape, having regard to the nature of the development and the proximity to the Small Growth Town and the assessed impacts on the local landscape character, the Commission were satisfied that a material contravention of Development Plan standard DM Standard 46 is warranted in this instance. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

13.0 Conditions

1. The development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application, as amended by the further plans and particulars received by the planning authority on the 6th day of August 2025, 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. The mitigation measures contained in the submitted Natura Impact Statement received by An Coimisiún Pleanála on the 11th day of May 2026 and those contained within the Natura Impact Statement (Revised 06/08/2024) submitted to the Planning Authority on the 18th day of September 2024 and Natura Impact Statement Passing Points (06/12/2024) submitted to the Planning Authority on the 6th day of August 2025 shall be implemented.

Reason: To protect the integrity of European sites.

3. Prior to commencement of development all measures as detailed in the submitted Invasive Species Management Plan to eradicate the Montbretia (*Crocasmia pottsii*) on the project site, as received by the Planning Authority

on the 18th September 2025, shall be implemented in full on site unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Planning Authority.

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

4. (a) The floodlighting and poles for the multi-sports pitch shall be omitted.

Reason: In the interests of rural amenity.

5. (a) The upgrade works to the public road shall be completed prior to the commencement of the operation of the development.

(b) The internal road network serving the proposed development, including turning bays, junctions, sight distances, footpaths and kerbs shall be in accordance with the detailed requirements of the planning authority for such works, and shall comply in all respects with the provisions of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets.

(c) Proposed internal finished roads layout in the format of cross / longitudinal sections details presenting geometrical parameters such as road gradients shall not exceed 1:20.

Reason: In the interest of road safety.

6. (a) Sight distance triangles shall be maintained and kept free from obstructions that would reduce the minimum visibility required.

(b) Prior to commencement of the development, the applicant shall submit detailed design drawings and measures incorporating the recommendations arising from its submitted Stage 1 Road Safety Audit submitted to the Planning Authority on the 6th day of August 2025.

(c) On completion of the development, a stage 3 Road Safety Audit shall be completed by an independent road safety auditor, at the developer's expense, and submitted for the written approval of the planning authority. Any safety issues highlighted in the audit shall be reviewed and addressed by the developer at their expense and shall be submitted for the written approval of the Planning Authority.

(d) The public road and margins that incorporate any proposed works adjacent to the LS-5334 and any proposed associated new surfacing pavement, kerbing, drainage infrastructure headwalls and culverts, signage and line marking including any public road margin reinstatement works and/or any public lighting works that shall be constructed and/or where proposed alterations, amendments and provision of new infrastructure that includes provisions of local road passing bays that will form part of the public road margins, shall comply with the standards and specification set out in particular to TII Standards and shall be agreed in advance and constructed to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority.

(e) Any damage including alterations to existing road, footpath or other public facilities or services caused by the proposed development shall be fully reinstated and finished specifications to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority.

(f) All necessary measures shall be taken by the contractor to prevent the spillage or deposit of clay, rubble, or other debris on adjoining roads during the course of the works.

Reason: In the interest of road safety.

7. (a) Provision of bicycle facilities including stands shall be in accordance with DM Standard 31(f) of County Galway Development Plan 2022-2028 whilst the positioning of same shall be located within strategic locations per desire lines for the benefit of the wider community.

(b) The applicant shall make provision for Electric Charge point infrastructure and spaces in accordance with DM Standard 31(g) Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 with provision of future EV ducting.

Prior to the commencement of development, final details in this regard shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the planning authority.

Reason: In the interest of sustainable travel.

8. The site shall be landscaped in accordance with a comprehensive scheme of landscaping, details of which shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with,

the planning authority prior to commencement of development. This scheme shall include the following:

- (a) A plan to scale of not less than 1:200 showing –
 - (i) Existing trees and hedgerows, specifying which are proposed for retention as features of the site landscaping.
 - (ii) The measures to be put in place for the protection of these landscape features during the construction period.
 - (iii) The species, variety, number, size and locations of all proposed trees and shrubs.
 - (iv) Details of screen planting [which shall not include cupressocyparis x leylandii.
 - (v) Details of roadside/street planting which shall not include prunus species.
 - (vi) Hard landscaping works, specifying surfacing materials and finished levels.
- (b) Specifications for mounding, levelling, cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment
- (c) A timescale for implementation.

All planting shall be adequately protected from damage until established. Any plants which die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, within a period of five years from the completion of the development, shall be replaced within the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the planning authority.

Reason: In the interest of residential and visual amenity.

9. The noise levels from the facilities building generated during the operation of the development shall not exceed 55 dB(A) Leq, 1hr when measured at the nearest occupied house and shall not exceed 45 dB(a) leq 15 mins at any other time. When measuring the specific noise, the time shall be any one hour.

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

10. Site development and building works shall be carried out between the hours of 0700 to 1900 hours Mondays to Fridays inclusive, between 0800 to 1400

hours on Saturdays and not at all on Sundays and public holidays. Deviation from these times shall only be allowed in exceptional circumstances where prior written agreement has been received from the planning authority.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of property in the vicinity.

11. Prior to the commencement of development the developer shall enter into a Connection Agreement (s) with Uisce Éireann (Irish Water) to provide for a service connection to the public water supply network.

Reason: In the interest of public health and to ensure adequate water/wastewater facilities.

12. Drainage arrangements including the attenuation and disposal of surface water, shall comply with the drainage and attenuation details submitted in the Soakaway and Rainwater Harvesting Calculations report submitted to the Planning Authority on the 18th day of September 2024 and with requirements of the relevant Section of the Council for such works and services.

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

13. The developer is requested to engage the services of a suitably qualified Archaeologist to carry out an Archaeological Impact Assessment which shall include a programme of Archaeological Test Excavation to respond to this request for Further Information. No sub-surface work shall be undertaken in the absence of the Archaeologist without his/her express consent.

ii) The Archaeologist shall inspect the proposed development site and detail the historical and archaeological background of the site (consulting appropriate documentary sources), and review all cartographic sources and aerial photographs for the area.

iii) The Archaeological Test Excavation must be carried out under licence from the National Monument Service (NMS) of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and in accordance with an approved method statement; note a period of 4-5 weeks should be allowed to facilitate processing and approval of the licence application and method statement.

iv) Test trenches shall be excavated at locations chosen by the Archaeologist, having consulted the site drawings. Excavation is to take place to the uppermost archaeological horizons only, where they survive. Where archaeological material is shown to be present, the Archaeologist shall suspend works in the area of archaeological interest pending a decision of the Planning Authority, in consultation with this Department, regarding appropriate mitigation. Please note that all features/archaeological surfaces within the test trenches are to be hand-cleaned and clearly visible for photographic purposes.

v) Having completed the work, the Archaeologist shall submit a written report to the Planning Authority and describing the findings of the AIA, including the results of the Archaeological Test Excavation. The report shall comment on the degree to which the extent, location and levels of all proposed foundations, services trenches and other subsurface works required for the development will affect the archaeological remains. This should be illustrated with appropriate plans, sections, etc.

vi) Where archaeological material is shown to be present, further mitigation measures will be required; these may include refusal, redesign to allow for preservation in situ, excavation and/or monitoring as deemed appropriate. The Department will advise the Planning Authority with regard to these matters. No decision should be made on this application until this Department and the Planning Authority have had the opportunity to fully evaluate the findings of the AIA.

vii) The Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) (required per the NIS mitigation measures) shall be updated to incorporate any significant findings that emerge from the AIA process including (but not limited to) the location of any archaeological or cultural heritage constraints relevant to the proposed development and shall present appropriate mitigation measures to protect the archaeological or cultural heritage environment

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

14. (a) The septic tank/wastewater treatment system hereby permitted shall be installed in accordance with the recommendations included within the site characterisation report submitted with this application on the 18th day of September 2024 and shall be in accordance with the standards set out in the document entitled Code of Practice - Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Small Communities, Business, Leisure Centres and Hotels (p.e. ≥ 10) – Environmental Protection Agency, 1999.

(b) Treated effluent from the septic tank/ wastewater treatment system shall be discharged to a percolation area/ polishing filter which shall be provided in accordance with the standards set out in the document entitled Code of Practice - Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Small Communities, Business, Leisure Centres and Hotels (p.e. ≥ 10) – Environmental Protection Agency, 1999. Prior to commencement of development details of such compliance and that the soil polishing filter design includes provision for an unsaturated depth above the flood levels for its location shall be submitted to the Planning Authority for its agreement.

(c) Within three months of the first public use of the development, the developer shall submit a report to the planning authority from a suitably qualified person (with professional indemnity insurance) certifying that the septic tank/ wastewater treatment system and associated works is constructed and operating in accordance with the standards set out in the Environmental Protection Agency document referred to above.

Reason: In the interest of public health and to prevent water pollution.

15. Prior to commencement of development, the developer shall lodge with the planning authority a cash deposit, a bond of an insurance company, or other security to secure the provision and satisfactory completion of roads, footpaths, watermains, drains, open space and other services required in connection with the development, coupled with an agreement empowering the local authority to apply such security or part thereof to the satisfactory completion of any part of the development. The form and amount of the security shall be as agreed between the planning authority and the developer or, in default of agreement, shall be referred to An Coimisiún Pleanála for

determination.

Reason: To ensure the satisfactory completion of the development.

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.

Ciarán Daly

Planning Inspector

12th August 2026

Appendix 1 - Form 1

EIA Pre-Screening

Case Reference	PL-500131-GY
Proposed Development Summary	Provision of new facilities buildings, grass multi sport playing pitch, sports facilities, new vehicular entrance, parking and passing bays.
Development Address	Lemonfield, Oughterard, Co Galway.
	In all cases check box /or leave blank
1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a 'project' for the purposes of EIA? (For the purposes of the Directive, "Project" means: - The execution of construction works or of other installations or schemes, - Other interventions in the natural surroundings and landscape including those involving the extraction of mineral resources)	☒ Yes, it is a 'Project'. Proceed to Q2.
	☐ No, No further action required.
2. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 1, Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)?	
☐ Yes, it is a Class specified in Part 1. EIA is mandatory. No Screening required. EIAR to be requested. Discuss with ADP.	
☒ No, it is not a Class specified in Part 1. Proceed to Q3	
3. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 2, Schedule 5, Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) OR a prescribed type of proposed road development under Article 8 of Roads Regulations 1994, AND does it meet/exceed the thresholds?	
☐ No, the development is not of a Class Specified in Part 2, Schedule 5 or a prescribed	

type of proposed road development under Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994. No Screening required.	
☐ Yes, the proposed development is of a Class and meets/exceeds the threshold. EIA is Mandatory. No Screening Required	
☒ Yes, the proposed development is of a Class but is sub-threshold. Preliminary examination required. (Form 2) OR If Schedule 7A information submitted proceed to Q4. (Form 3 Required)	Part 2, Class 10(b)(iv). Threshold: Urban development of an area greater than 20 hectares outside a business district or other parts of a built-up area.

4. Has Schedule 7A information been submitted AND is the development a Class of Development for the purposes of the EIA Directive (as identified in Q3)?	
Yes ☐	Screening Determination required (Complete Form 3)
No ☒	Pre-screening determination conclusion remains as above (Q1 to Q3)

Inspector: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 2

Form 2 – EIA Preliminary Examination

Case Reference	PL-500131-GY
Proposed Development Summary	Provision of new facilities buildings, grass multi sport playing pitch, sports facilities, new vehicular entrance, parking and passing bays.
Development Address	Lemonfield, Oughterard, Co Galway.
This preliminary examination should be read with, and in the light of, the rest of the Inspector's Report attached herewith.	
Characteristics of proposed development (In particular, the size, design, cumulation with existing/ proposed development, nature of demolition works, use of natural resources, production of waste, pollution and nuisance, risk of accidents/disasters and to human health).	Briefly comment on the key characteristics of the development, having regard to the criteria listed. New facilities building of 644sqm, multi-sports grass pitch, amenity area, ball courts, astro area, car parking and new entrance on a site area of 4.55ha in a rural area.
Location of development (The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the development in particular existing and approved land use, abundance/capacity of natural resources, absorption capacity of natural environment e.g. wetland, coastal zones, nature reserves, European sites, densely populated areas, landscapes, sites of historic, cultural or archaeological significance).	Briefly comment on the location of the development, having regard to the criteria listed The site partly consists of bogland in the northern area and is within a rural area is surrounded by agricultural land holdings some of which is partially forested. It is c.220m from the lakeshore of Lough Corrib (and associated Natura 2000 sites) and there are drainage channels on the site which lead to the Owenriff river which leads to the lakeshore. I note no cultural, historic or archaeologically significant sensitivities on or in close proximity to the subject site.
Types and characteristics of potential impacts (Likely significant effects on environmental parameters, magnitude and spatial extent, nature of impact, transboundary, intensity and complexity, duration, cumulative effects and opportunities for mitigation).	Having regard to the characteristics of the development and the sensitivity of its location, consider the potential for SIGNIFICANT effects, not just effects. Modest scale of the development would give rise to no significant environment effects on the site or in the vicinity as shown in the submitted documents.

Conclusion	
Likelihood of Significant Effects	Conclusion in respect of EIA
There is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.	EIA is not required.

Inspector: _____ **Date:** _____

DP/ADP: _____ **Date:** _____

(only where Schedule 7A information or EIAR required)

Appendix 3

AA Screening

Screening for Appropriate Assessment Test for likely significant effects	
Step 1: Description of the project and local site characteristics	
Brief description of project	Provision of new facilities building, grass multi-sport playing pitch, sports facility pitches and courts, new vehicular entrance, parking and passing bays.
Brief description of development site characteristics and potential impact mechanisms	Site area 4.55ha, floor area of new building 644sqm. New pitches, courts, astro area and car parking area over majority of the site.
Screening report	Y – within NIS
Natura Impact Statement	Y – Natura Impact Statement (May 2026) prepared by Aster Environmental Consultants Ltd. (Marie Louise Heffernan, CEnv, MIEEM, MSc). Natura Impact Statement (Revised 06/08/2024) and Natura Impact Statement Passing Points (06/12/2024) as part of the Oughterard Rugby Club development prepared by Aster Environmental Consultants Ltd (Marie Louise Heffernan, CEnv, MIEEM, MSc).
Relevant submissions	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage initial submission in relation to nature conservation noted the connections to the Lough Corrib SAC which it noted contains a population of Annex II species, Freshwater Pearl Mussel which are sensitive to sedimentation impacts. It recommended the mitigation measures contained in the NIS be implemented and that an Ecological Clerk of Works be appointed to ensure the success of these measures.
The proposed development assessed in the NIS is that described in the public notices including the construction of roadside passing bays. Section 2.0 of the NIS provides a description of the proposed development and the methodology for the construction of, inter alia, the main sports pitch, drainage design, the access, passing bay and roadside works, surface water management and wastewater treatment. Section 2.5 notes that the works associated with the construction of the existing rugby pitch and that it is part of the existing baseline. Section 2.7 of the revised NIS details the works to the passing bays and roadside works.	

The revised NIS notes the previous site surveys including the habitats recorded such as cutover bog. It notes that additional field surveys and site inspections were undertaken in March, April and May 2026. This noted that the site continues to comprise of a mixture of grassland, scrub and areas of previously modified peatland and it included the existing rugby pitch within the baseline. Section 3.5 relates to the breeding bird surveys and section 3.6 relates to the mammal survey.

Section 4.5 (fauna) notes that “a single otter spraint was recorded on a drainage ditch at the interface between degraded peatland (PB4) and disturbed ground (ED2), indicating occasional use of the site by this species. No holts, couches or other evidence of breeding or resting sites were identified. The drainage ditches within the site are shallow and narrow and are considered suboptimal habitat for otter when compared to larger watercourses such as the Owenriff River”. It further notes that “the site provides low value, occasional foraging habitat only, and does not support any key otter resting or breeding features or relevance to Lough Corrib SAC”. It also noted that the site does not support significant habitat for other protected species of relevance to European sites.

Step 2. Identification of relevant European sites using the Source-pathway-receptor model

European Site (code)	Qualifying interests ¹ Link to conservation objectives (NPWS, date)	Distance from proposed development (km)	Ecological connections ²	Consider further in screening ³ Y/N
Lough Corrib Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (site code 000297)	Conservation Objectives, NPWS, 28th April 2017. <u>Qualifying Interests</u> Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (Littorelletalia uniflorae) [3110] Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the Littorelletea uniflorae and/or Isoeto-Nanojuncetea [3130] Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp. [3140]	c. 7m to north-east	Land drains on the site with potential connection to the Owenriff River which leads to the SAC.	Y

	Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitriche-Batrachion vegetation [3260] Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites) [6210] Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae) [6410] Active raised bogs [7110] Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150] Calcareous fens with Cladium mariscus and species of the Caricion davallianae [7210] Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220] Alkaline fens [7230] Limestone pavements [8240] Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles [91A0]			
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	Bog woodland [91D0] Margaritifera margaritifera (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029] Austropotamobius pallipes (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092] Petromyzon marinus (Sea Lamprey) [1095] Lampetra planeri (Brook Lamprey) [1096] Salmo salar (Salmon) [1106] Rhinolophus hipposideros (Lesser Horseshoe Bat) [1303] Lutra lutra (Otter) [1355] Najas flexilis (Slender Naiad) [1833] Hamatocaulis vernicosus (Slender Green Feather-moss) [6216]			
Lough Corrib Special Protection Area (SPA) (site code 004042)	Conservation Objectives, NPWS, 27th January 2023 <u>Qualifying Interests</u> Pochard (Aythya ferina) [A059] Tufted Duck (Aythya fuligula) [A061]	c.150m to north-east	Land drains on the site with potential connection to the Owenriff River which leads to the SPA.	Y

	Common Scoter (<i>Melanitta nigra</i>) [A065] Hen Harrier (<i>Circus cyaneus</i>) [A082] Coot (<i>Fulica atra</i>) [A125] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182] Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194] Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395] Shoveler (<i>Spatula clypeata</i>) [A857] Gadwall (<i>Mareca strepera</i>) [A889] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]			
What sites were excluded on the basis of separation / lack of pathways?				
¹ Summary description / cross reference to NPWS website is acceptable at this stage in the report ² Based on source-pathway-receptor: Direct/ indirect/ tentative/ none, via surface water/ ground water/ air/ use of habitats by mobile species ³ if no connections: N				
Step 3. Describe the likely effects of the project (if any, alone <u>or</u> in combination) on European Sites				

AA Screening matrix		
Site name Qualifying interests	Possibility of significant effects (alone) in view of the conservation objectives of the site*	
	Impacts	Effects
Site 1: Lough Corrib Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (site code 000297) <u>Qualifying Interests</u> Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (Littorelletalia uniflorae) [3110] Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the Littorelletea uniflorae and/or Isoeto-Nanojuncetea [3130] Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp. [3140] Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitriche-Batrachion vegetation [3260] Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites) [6210] Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils	Direct: N/A – not located within SAC Indirect: Negative impacts (temporary) on surface water/water quality due to construction and transport related emissions including increased sedimentation and construction related pollution. Potential disturbance (noise, movement and lighting) impacts during construction and at operational stage. Habitat modification. No evidence was found of the Lesser Horseshoe Bat on the site was found and it was noted to not constitute suitable foraging or roosting habitat. The NIS by MKOS (page 12) notes that the location of this species in the SAC is at the northern shores of the Lough, more than 10km north-west of the subject site and “outside the foraging range of the bat population for which the SAC is designated”. It therefore noted no pathway. Operational stage: surface water run-off with contaminants from buildings and contaminated run-off such as hydrocarbons. Nutrient enrichment.	No habitat modification effects as confined to the subject site. No disturbance effects as such impacts would be localized to the site, away from the SAC. Potential to undermine water quality, Freshwater Pearl Mussel and other mobile species of the SAC such as otter. I note that Table 4 on page 39 of the NIS screens out the mobile species of the SAC. This appears to be a typo as on pages 40 and 41 where potential risk to Freshwater Pearl Mussel, Atlantic Salmon, Brook Lamprey and Otter are identified. Invasive species spread into habitat of SPA could degrade this habitat. Possibility of significant effects cannot be ruled out without further analysis and assessment.

(Molinion caeruleae) [6410] Active raised bogs [7110] Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150] Calcareous fens with Cladium mariscus and species of the Caricion davallianae [7210] Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220] Alkaline fens [7230] Limestone pavements [8240] Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles [91A0] Bog woodland [91D0] Margaritifera margaritifera (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029] Austropotamobius pallipes (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092] Petromyzon marinus (Sea Lamprey) [1095] Lampetra planeri (Brook Lamprey) [1096] Salmo salar (Salmon) [1106]		
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Rhinolophus hipposideros (Lesser Horseshoe Bat) [1303] Lutra lutra (Otter) [1355] Najas flexilis (Slender Naiad) [1833] Hamatocaulis vernicosus (Slender Green Feather-moss) [6216]		
	Likelihood of significant effects from proposed development (alone): Y	
	If No, is there likelihood of significant effects occurring in combination with other plans or projects?	
	Possibility of significant effects (alone) in view of the conservation objectives of the site*	
	Impacts	Effects
Site 2: Lough Corrib Special Protection Area (SPA) (site code 004042) Conservation Objectives, NPWS, 27th January 2023 <u>Qualifying Interests</u> Pochard (Aythya ferina) [A059] Tufted Duck (Aythya fuligula) [A061] Common Scoter (Melanitta nigra) [A065] Hen Harrier (Circus cyaneus) [A082] Coot (Fulica atra) [A125]	Direct: N/A – not located within SPA Indirect: Negative impacts (temporary) on surface water/water quality due to construction and transport related emissions including increased sedimentation and construction related pollution. Potential disturbance (noise, movement and lighting) impacts during construction and at operational stage. Habitat modification. Operational stage: surface water run-off with contaminants from buildings and contaminated run-off such as hydrocarbons. Nutrient enrichment. While there are grasses on the site, other than the rugby pitch, these are	No disturbance effects as such impacts would be localized to the site, away from the SPA. Water quality degradation and changes to habitat quality/function or habitat loss. Invasive species spread into habitat of SPA could degrade this habitat. Possibility of significant effects cannot be ruled out without further analysis and assessment.

Golden Plover (Pluvialis apricaria) [A140]	overgrown and broken up by shrubs, bogland etc. Bird surveys were conducted in March, April and May with no issues identified in relation to the site being used by wintering birds and no development proposed on the rugby pitch. The revised NIS relies on the MKOS 2021 survey in relation to Hen Harrier (Circus cyaneus) as it states that it was not possible to complete the survey between November and February, however, it did conclude that following assessment of habitats present, the site was not suitable for this species. The MKOS NIS stated “ <i>the site is not of ecological significance to roosting hen harrier. Whilst hen harrier could potentially use gorse scrub for roosting, they have a preference for reedbed, heath/bog, rank grassland, fen and bracken (O’ Donoghue, 2010). The aforementioned habitats and gorse scrub are common and widespread in the wider area of the site and along the shores of Lough Corrib. The loss of a small area of gorse scrub with the proposed development site would not have an adverse effect on the conservation status of the species</i> ”. Noting the site conditions and updated reports, I note no basis to change this conclusion. The revised NIS noted no evidence that the site is used for feeding, roosting, nesting or commuting by any of the qualifying interests of the SPA.	
Black-headed Gull (Chroicocephalus ridibundus) [A179]		
Common Gull (Larus canus) [A182]		
Common Tern (Sterna hirundo) [A193]		
Arctic Tern (Sterna paradisaea) [A194]		
Greenland White-fronted Goose (Anser albifrons flavirostris) [A395]		
Shoveler (Spatula clypeata) [A857]		
Gadwall (Mareca strepera) [A889]		
Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]		
	Likelihood of significant effects from proposed development (alone): Y	
	If No, is there likelihood of significant effects occurring in combination with other plans or projects?	
* Where a restore objective applies it is necessary to consider whether the project might compromise the objective of restoration or make restoration more difficult.		

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

It is not possible to exclude the possibility that proposed development alone would result significant effects on Lough Corrib SAC and Lough Corrib SPA.

An appropriate assessment is required on the basis of the possible effects of the project 'alone'. Further assessment in-combination with other plans and projects is not required at screening stage.

Proceed to AA.

Screening Determination

Significant effects cannot be excluded

In accordance with Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and on the basis of the information considered in this AA screening, I conclude that it is not possible to exclude that the proposed development alone or in combination with other plans and projects will give rise to significant effects on Lough Corrib SAC and Lough Corrib SPA European Sites in view of the sites conservation objectives. Appropriate Assessment is required.

This determination is based on:

- The potential water-based connection route from the land drains on the site via the Owenriff River to the European sites.
- The potential for negative impacts on water quality via sedimentation and/or release of hydrocarbons which water quality could degrade habitat and negatively impact on the qualifying interests of the SAC and SPA.
- The potential for invasive species to be transmitted to the SAC and SPA.

Appendix 4

Appropriate Assessment

Appropriate Assessment

The requirements of Article 6(3) as related to appropriate assessment of a project under part XAB, sections 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) are considered fully in this section.

Taking account of the preceding screening determination, the following is an appropriate assessment of the implications of the proposed development of new facilities building, grass multi-sport playing pitch, sports facilities pitches and courts, new vehicular entrance, parking and passing bays in view of the relevant conservation objectives of Lough Corrib SAC and Lough Corrib SPA based on scientific information provided by the applicant.

The information relied upon includes the following:

- Natura Impact Statement (May 2026) prepared by Aster Environmental Consultants Ltd. (Marie Louise Heffernan, CEnv, MIEEM, MSc). (Marie Louise Heffernan, CEnv, MIEEM, MSc).
- Natura Impact Statement (Revised 06/08/2024) and Natura Impact Statement Passing Points (06/12/2024) as part of the Oughterard Rugby Club development prepared by Aster Environmental Consultants Ltd (Marie Louise Heffernan, CEnv, MIEEM, MSc).
- The submission of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.
- The Screening Assessment and Appropriate Assessment undertaken by Galway Co. Co..

Section 2.7 of the revised NIS details the works to the passing bays and roadside works.

I am satisfied that the information provided is adequate to allow for Appropriate Assessment. I am satisfied that all aspects of the project which could result in significant effects are considered and assessed in the NIS and mitigation measures designed to avoid or reduce any adverse effects on site integrity are included and assessed for effectiveness.

Submissions/observations

Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage initial submission related to nature conservation noted the connections to the Lough Corrib SAC which it noted contains a population of Annex II species, Freshwater Pearl Mussel which are sensitive to sedimentation impacts. It recommended the mitigation measures contained in

the NIS be required and that an Ecological Clerk of Works be appointed to ensure the success of these measures.

Lough Corrib Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (site code 000297)

Summary of Key issues that could give rise to adverse effects (from screening stage):

- (i) **Water quality degradation (construction and operation)**
- (ii) **Disturbance of mobile species**
- (iii) **Spread of invasive species**

See Section 6.4.1 (pages 39 to 41) and Section 7.0 (page 44) of the revised NIS

Qualifying Interest features likely to be affected	Conservation Objectives	Potential adverse effects	Mitigation measures (summary)
			Revised NIS Section 8.0, Updated NIS Section 6.0
Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (Littorelletalia uniflorae) [3110] Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the Littorelletea uniflorae and/or Isoetum-Nanojuncetea [3130] Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp. [3140] Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and	Maintain / restore favourable conservation condition of attributes and targets of each qualifying interest (see Conservation Objectives, NPWS, 28th April 2017)	Diminution of water quality in the SAC with negative effects on the habitat quality and distribution, and on species health, population and their distribution within and associated with the water quality, decline of species related to the existing terrestrial and marine habitats, loss of accessibility within the river channels.	Drainage clearance works to avoid the main amphibian breeding period (February to May inclusive) where possible. Pollution control measures to prevent impacts on the Owenriff River and Lough Corrib during construction stage including, inter alia, scheduling to avoid periods of elevated water levels, Ecological Clerks of Works to be appointed to ensure compliance with mitigation measures, protection of existing drains, pipes will be installed where crossings required, silt fences and/or silt curtains for works near drainage features, storage of excavated soils away from drainage features, only clean, washed sediment free stone to be used during construction, all stone or still from certified invasive free sources, spill kits,

Callitricho-Batrachion vegetation [3260] Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites) [6210] Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae) [6410] Active raised bogs [7110] Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150] Calcareous fens with Cladium mariscus and species of the Caricion davallianae [7210] Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220] Alkaline fens [7230]			drip trays, refuelling off site, machinery to be cleaned prior to entering the site, floating construction method to minimise impact on peat soils, no direct discharge to water courses. For otter, construction to be in daylight hours only, no artificial lighting to be directed toward drainage ditches or wetland areas, machinery will not be left idle when not active, protection of drainage ditches and wet areas from sediment release and any works with potential to impact mammals such as otters will be preceded by ecological inspection to confirm the absence of breeding or resting sites. Operational controls include, inter alia, petrol interceptors for all surface water runoff, permeable surfaces to be maintained, permeable surfaces in parking areas and passing bays, maintenance of the polishing filter and regular inspection of the on-site WWTS, no application of chemical fertilisers to the pitches, external lighting to be restricted to the areas specified in the application i.e. the main pitches and access areas, to minimise upward and outward light spill with no operation after 10pm, precautionary approach in relation to flood risk such as checking of drainage protection measures, protection of drainage features through
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Limestone pavements [8240] Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles [91A0] Bog woodland [91D0] Margaritifera margaritifera (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029] Austropotamobius pallipes (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092] Petromyzon marinus (Sea Lamprey) [1095] Lampetra planeri (Brook Lamprey) [1096] Salmo salar (Salmon) [1106] Rhinolophus hipposideros (Lesser Horseshoe Bat) [1303] Lutra lutra (Otter) [1355] Najas flexilis (Slender Naiad) [1833] Hamatocaulis vernicosus (Slender Green Feather-moss) [6216]			vegetative buffers, geotextile stabilisation and appropriate planting. All mitigation measures to be incorporated into a CEMP which will set out roles and responsibilities and any consultation with NPWS, Inland Fisheries Ireland will be incorporated.	

The above table is based on the documentation and information provided on the file and I am satisfied that the submitted NIS has identified the relevant attributes and targets of the Qualifying Interests. In particular, I note those relating to Freshwater Pearl Mussel which are noted to be particularly sensitive to sedimentation impacts.

Assessment of issues that could give rise to adverse effects view of conservation objectives

(i) Water quality degradation

Potential impacts due to sediment run-off from the site, hydrocarbon or untreated surface or other untreated water run-off.

Mitigation measures and conditions

Examples from Section 8.0 of the revised NIS: roadside drains at passing bays to be partially filled with clean local stone with pipes installed to accommodate flow, silt curtains will be installed where drains have to be widened to prevent sediment from entering watercourses, silt fences along existing drains, treat all surface water run-off through petrol interceptor before discharge to soakpits or attenuation tanks, wastewater treatment system to EPA standards, materials management, spill prevent kits, water flow management during and post construction, construction best practice, Supervision by on site environmental clerk of works.

(ii) Disturbance of mobile species

Otters could be disturbed by construction activities and lighting.

Mitigation measures and conditions

Measures to ensure setback from and no uncontrolled run-off to watercourses, restrict construction activities to daylight hours and prohibit artificial lighting during night-time, turn off machinery when not in use and limit its operation to designated area, construction best practice, supervision by on site environmental officer / ECOW.

(iii) Spread of invasive species

Montbretia present on the site.

Mitigation measures and conditions

Adherence to legal requirements, washing of vehicles and implementation of the submitted Invasive Species Management Plan report prepared by Aster Environmental Consultants Ltd.	
In-combination effects I am satisfied that in-combination effects has been assessed adequately in the NIS. The applicant has demonstrated satisfactorily that no significant residual effects will remain post the application of mitigation measures and there is therefore no potential for in-combination effects.	
Findings and conclusions The applicant determined that following the implementation of mitigation measures the construction and operation of the proposed development alone, or in combination with other plans and projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of this European site. Based on the information provided, I am satisfied that adverse effects arising from aspects of the proposed development can be excluded for the European sites considered in the appropriate Assessment. No direct impacts are predicted. Indirect impacts would mainly arise via impacts on water quality and mitigation measures are described to prevent ingress of silt laden surface water, other pollutants and untreated surface water. Potential disturbance will be adequately mitigated. The appointment of an ecologist to supervise all construction activities is proposed. I am satisfied that the mitigation measures proposed to prevent adverse effects have been assessed as effective and can be implemented. Reasonable scientific doubt I am satisfied that no reasonable scientific doubt remains as to the absence of adverse effects. Site Integrity The proposed development will not affect the attainment of the Conservation objectives of the Lough Corrib SAC. Adverse effects on site integrity can be excluded and no reasonable scientific doubt remains as to the absence of such effects.	

Lough Corrib Special Protection Area (SPA) (site code 004042)

Summary of Key issues that could give rise to adverse effects (from screening stage):

- (i) Water quality degradation (construction and operation)
- (ii) Disturbance of mobile species
- (iii) Spread of invasive species

See Section 6.4.2 (pages 41 to 44) and Section 7.0 (page 44) of the revised NIS

Qualifying Interest features likely to be affected	Conservation Objectives	Potential adverse effects	Mitigation measures (summary)
			NIS Section 8.0 Updated NIS Section 6.0
Pochard (<i>Aythya ferina</i>) [A059] Tufted Duck (<i>Aythya fuligula</i>) [A061] Common Scoter (<i>Melanitta nigra</i>) [A065] Hen Harrier (<i>Circus cyaneus</i>) [A082] Coot (<i>Fulica atra</i>) [A125] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182]	Maintain / restore favourable conservation condition of the listed attributes and targets of each qualifying interest (see Conservation Objectives, NPWS, 27th January 2023)	Diminution of water quality in the SPA with negative effects on the habitat quality and distribution, and on species health, population and their distribution within and associated with the water quality, decline of species related to the existing terrestrial and marine habitats, loss of accessibility within the river channels and disturbance of otter from works in the vicinity of water channels.	No site clearance, vegetation removal or other potentially disturbing works to be undertaken during the main bird nesting season. Pollution control measures to prevent impacts on the Owenriff River and Lough Corrib during construction stage including, inter alia, scheduling to avoid periods of elevated water levels, Ecological Clerks of Works to be appointed to ensure compliance with mitigation measures, protection of existing drains, pipes will be installed where crossings required, silt fences and/or silt curtains for works near drainage features, storage of excavated soils away from drainage features, only clean, washed sediment free stone to be used during construction, all stone or still from certified invasive free sources, spill kits, drip trays, refuelling off site, machinery to be cleaned prior to

Common Tern (Sterna hirundo) [A193] Arctic Tern (Sterna paradisaea) [A194] Greenland White-fronted Goose (Anser albifrons flavirostris) [A395] Shoveler (Spatula clypeata) [A857] Gadwall (Mareca strepera) [A889] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]			entering the site, floating construction method to minimise impact on peat soils, no direct discharge to water courses. Operational controls include, inter alia, petrol interceptors for all surface water runoff, permeable surfaces to be maintained, permeable surfaces in parking areas and passing bays, maintenance of the polishing filter and regular inspection of the on-site WWTS, no application of chemical fertilisers to the pitches, external lighting to be restricted to the main pitched and access areas, to minimise upward and outward light spill with no operation after 10pm, precautionary approach in relation to flood risk such as checking of drainage protection measures, protection of drainage features through vegetative buffers, geotextile stabilisation and appropriate planting. All mitigation measures to be incorporated into a CEMP which will set out roles and responsibilities and any consultation with NPWS, Inland Fisheries Ireland will be incorporated.
The above table is based on the documentation and information provided on the file and I am satisfied that the submitted NIS has identified the relevant attributes and targets of the Qualifying Interests.			
Assessment of issues that could give rise to adverse effects view of conservation objectives			

(i) Water quality degradation

Potential impacts due to sediment run-off from the site, hydrocarbon or untreated surface water run-off.

Mitigation measures and conditions

Examples from Section 8.0 of the revised NIS: roadside drains at passing bays to be partially filled with clean local stone with pipes installed to accommodate flow, silt curtains will be installed where drains have to be widened to prevent sediment from entering watercourses, silt fences along existing drains, treat all surface water run-off through petrol interceptor before discharge to soakpits or attenuation tanks, wastewater treatment system to EPA standards, materials management, spill prevent kits, water flow management during and post construction, construction best practice, Supervision by on site environmental officer.

(ii) Disturbance of mobile species

The NIS concludes that birds are confined ecologically to the lake such that no disturbance impacts arise. Surveys recorded no supporting habitat for QI of Lough Corrib SPA.

Mitigation measures and conditions

Not required.

(iii) Spread of invasive species

Montbretia present on the site.

Mitigation measures and conditions

Adherence to legal requirements, vehicle washing and implementation of the submitted Invasive Species Management Plan report prepared by Aster Environmental Consultants Ltd.

In-combination effects

I am satisfied that in-combination effects has been assessed adequately in the NIS. The applicant has demonstrated satisfactorily that no significant residual effects will remain post the application of mitigation measures and there is therefore no potential for in-combination effects.

Findings and conclusions

The applicant determined that following the implementation of mitigation measures the construction and operation of the proposed development alone, **or in combination with other plans and projects**, will not adversely affect the integrity of this European site.

Based on the information provided, I am satisfied that adverse effects arising from aspects of the proposed development can be excluded for the European sites considered in the appropriate Assessment. No direct impacts are predicted. Potential indirect impacts would mainly arise via impacts on water quality and mitigation measures are described to prevent ingress of silt laden surface water, other pollutants and untreated surface water. Potential disturbance is not a significant issue. The appointment of an ecologist to supervise all construction activities is proposed. I am satisfied that the mitigation measures proposed to prevent adverse effects have been assessed as effective and can be implemented.

Reasonable scientific doubt

I am satisfied that no reasonable scientific doubt remains as to the absence of adverse effects.

Site Integrity

The proposed development will not affect the attainment of the Conservation objectives of the Lough Corrib SPA. Adverse effects on site integrity can be excluded and no reasonable scientific doubt remains as to the absence of such effects.

Appendix 5

Water Framework Directive Screening and Assessment

WFD IMPACT ASSESSMENT STAGE 1: SCREENING

Step 1: The proposed development is for the provision of new facilities building, grass multi-sport playing pitch, sports facility pitches and courts, new vehicular entrance, parking and passing bays.

New pitches, courts, astro area and car parking area over majority of the site.

Site Area 4.55ha

Total floor area 644sqm, demolition of 321sqm.

The site is within a rural area close to the Owenriff River which flows into Lough Corrib.

There are some land drains running through the site. There is one river water body c.7m to the north-west, the Owenriff (Corrib)_020 (Code IE_WE_30O020200) waterbody noted to be of “poor” status with a roadway between the river and the subject site. This river flows into the Corrib Upper waterbody (Code IE_WE_30_666b) noted to be of “good” status. The site is above the Maam-Clonbur groundwater body (code IE_WE_G_0006) noted to be of “good” status.

An Coimisiún Pleanála ref. no.	PL-500131-GY	Townland, address	Lemonfield, Oughterard, Co Galway.
Description of project		The proposed development consists of the provision of new facilities building, grass multi-sport playing pitch, sports facility pitches and courts, new vehicular entrance, parking and passing bays.	
Brief site description, relevant to WFD Screening,		The site is relatively flat and consists of an area of peat and the front field consists of an area of raised bogland with some drains located around the perimeter. The Owenriff River is located across the road to the north-west and this flows into Lough Corrib a short distance away. The site is surrounded by rural agricultural lands to the west, south and east. The proposed development would be located adjacent to the above named water bodies with direct hydrological connections to same. Connection is proposed to the public water network, an on-site wastewater treatment system to EPA Code is proposed and SUDS measures are proposed.	
Proposed surface water details		Surface water management includes SUDS (including soakpits and attenuation tank). Part of the site is located in flood zone A/B. The Flood Risk Assessment notes no significant flood risks from the development, however.	

Proposed water supply source & available capacity	Public network with no capacity issues noted by Uisce Éireann.
Proposed wastewater treatment system & available capacity, other issues	On-site wastewater treatment system to EPA Code.
Others?	

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)
River Waterbody	c.7m to the north-west, with intervening public road between it and the site.	Owenriff (Corrib)_020 (Code IE_WE_3000 20200)	Poor	At risk.	Agriculture, Hydro morphology, River Invasive Species, Yes in relation to the Freshwater	Potentially via land drains, surface run-off and groundwater.

					Pearl Mussel and Salmonid which requires high water quality (effected by nutrient run-off related to agriculture, untreated wastewater) and which is affected by invasive species.	
Surface Waterbody	c.160m to the north with intervening	Corrib Upper waterbody (Code IE_WE_30_6 66b)	Good	Not at risk.	No pressures.	Link from the Owenriff River which is hydrologically connected to the subject site.

	road and rural lands					
Groundwater Waterbody	Underlying site	Maam-Clonbur groundwater body (code IE_WE_G_0006)	Good	Not at risk.	No pressures.	Surface run-off to 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	Waterbody 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.	Surface	Owenriff (Corrib)_020 (Code IE_WE_30 O020200)	Indirect hydrological connection via land drains	Siltation, pH (Concrete), hydrocarbon spillages	Standard construction practice CEMP and mitigation measures outlined in NIS	Yes	Screened in

2.	Surface	Corrib Upper waterbody (Code IE_WE_30 _666b)	Indirect hydrological connection via land drains to Owenriff River and onwards to lake	Siltation, pH (Concrete), hydrocarbon spillages	Standard construction practice CEMP and mitigation measures outlined in NIS	Yes	Screened in
3.	Ground	Maam- Clonbur groundwat er body (code IE_WE_G_ 0006)	Pathway exists	Spillages.	Standard construction practice CEMP and mitigation measures outlined in NIS.	Yes	Screened in

OPERATIONAL PHASE							
4.	Surface	Owenriff (Corrib)_02 0 (Code IE_WE_30 O020200)	Indirect hydrological connection via land drains to Owenriff River.	Untreated surface water or other run-off (e.g. hydrocarbons from vehicles) from the development or site.	SUDS measures.	Yes	Screened In
5.	Surface	Corrib Upper waterbody (Code IE_WE_30 _666b)	Indirect hydrological connection via land drains to Owenriff River and onwards to lake.	Untreated surface water or other run-off (e.g. hydrocarbons from vehicles) from the development or site.	SUDS measures.	Yes	Screened In

6.	Ground	Maam-Clonbur groundwater body (code IE_WE_G_0006)	Pathway exists	Potential link to water body via surface water draining to ground, untreated surface water or pollutants. WWTP discharging to ground	SUDS measures. Adherence to EPA CoP	Yes	Screened In
DECOMMISSIONING PHASE							
7.	N/A						

STAGE 2: ASSESSMENT				
Details of Mitigation Required to Comply with WFD Objectives				
Groundwater				
Development/Activity e.g. abstraction, outfall, etc.	<u>Objective 1: Groundwater and surface water</u> Prevent or limit the input of pollutants into groundwater and surface water and to prevent the deterioration of the status of all bodies of groundwater and surface water	<u>Objective 2 : Groundwater and surface water</u> Protect, enhance and restore all bodies of groundwater and surface water, ensure a balance between abstraction and recharge, with the aim of achieving good status*	<u>Objective 3: Groundwater and surface water</u> Reverse any significant and sustained upward trend in the concentration of any pollutant resulting from the impact of human activity	Does this component comply with WFD Objectives 1, 2, 3 & 4? (if answer is no, a development cannot proceed without a derogation under art. 4.7)

	Describe mitigation required to meet objective 1:	Describe mitigation required to meet objective 2:	Describe mitigation required to meet objective 3:	

Development Activities 1 to 6: Construction and Operation phases, groundwater and surface water	Best practice construction measures, measures to protect the European sites which primarily relate to the protection of water quality as outlined in Section 6.0 of the NIS. Surface water drainage measures would ensure no increase in surface water run-off by comparison with existing situation.	Measures outlined in the NIS and CEMP.	Measures outlined in the NIS and CEMP.	Yes
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	Use of SUDS measures to ensure no untreated surface water discharge. On site wastewater treatment system to EPA Code.			
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