



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report PL-500239-GY-25

Development	Construction of 55 no. houses and all ancillary works.
Location	Caheronaun & Caherwalter, Loughrea, County Galway.
Planning Authority	Galway County Council.
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	2561163.
Applicant(s)	Leadlane (Loughrea) Ltd.
Type of Application	Permission.
Planning Authority Decision	Grant Permission + Conditions.
Type of Appeal	Third Party Normal Planning Appeal.
Appellant(s)	Mary Barrett.
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 1.89ha., consists of an irregular area made up mainly of a grass field including a low broken up rubble type wall towards its eastern end, a construction compound towards the south-east and there is an adjacent east-west hardstanding area inside the southern border. It fronts the N65 road and is screened from it by mature hedging. It is east of a housing estate currently under construction, Triantán an Aoill from which vehicular access is proposed. Danesfort Court housing estate is an established estate adjacent to the south and the Ceathrú an Iarla housing estate adjacent to the south-east is currently under construction.
- 1.2. The site is at the north-east edge of the built-up area of the town of Loughrea.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. The proposed development, in summary, consists of the following:

- Construction of 55 no. houses including:

- Two no. three bedroom semi-detached two storey houses (Type A).
- 10 no. three bedroom semi-detached two storey houses (Type B).
- 8 no. three bedroom semi-detached two storey houses (Type C).
- 12 no. two bedroom semi-detached two storey houses (Type D).
- 16 no. two bedroom two storey houses (Type E).
- Three no. two bedroom terraced two storey houses (Type F).
- Four no. three bedroom terraced two storey houses (Type G).
- Provision of public open space area including playground.
- Bicycle parking, public lighting, landscaping and revised boundary treatments.
- Car parking including ducting to all spaces for future EV charge points.
- Connection to mains water infrastructure and public sewer.
- On site surface water attenuation.

- Vehicular and pedestrian access from the L4196 (Caheronaun Park Road) via the Triantán an Aoill housing east to the west.
- Additional vehicular and pedestrian connectivity to the Danesfort Court to the south.
- Retention of temporary on site construction compound and associated internal roadway and storage areas.
- Notable reports accompanying the application include: Appropriate Assessment Screening Report, Stage 1 Road Safety Audit, Updated Construction Traffic Management Plan and a Traffic and Transport Assessment report. In response to the transport issues raised in the appeal, the applicant included a response letter from CST Group Chartered Consulting Engineers.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

Galway County Council decided to grant permission subject to 31 no. conditions.

Notable conditions include:

- Condition no. 3 requires the development comply with the recommendations, summary and conclusions set out in the submitted Traffic and Transport Assessment and Road Safety Audit.
- Condition no. 4 requires the internal road network to comply with the detailed requirements of the Planning Authority and with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets including the NTA Cycle Design Manual.
- Condition no. 6 requires the commission of a road safety audit (stage 2) that will review the detailed design drawings and measures recommended at stage 1 and recommendations shall be incorporated.
- Condition no. 7 requires a stage 3 road safety audit on the completion of the development for agreement with the Planning Authority.
- Condition no. 8 requires construction standards in line with the Council's taking in charge document.

- Condition no. 13 requires the completion of the housing development and operational services prior to the occupation of any residential unit.
- Condition no. 14 requires the agreement of the areas to be taken in charge with the Council and P.A. within three months of the final grant of permission.
- Condition no. 17 requires the development be supervised by a consulting engineer who shall up on the completion of each phase submit a certificate as to the adequacy of the standard of the works for agreement with the P.A..
- Condition no. 18 requires all residential units to be provided with functional EV charging points.
- Condition no. 21 requires that all boundary walls facing open spaces shall be finished in local stone, all internal side and rear boundaries shall be 1.8m in height and constructed of plastered blockwork and that all boundaries to the side and front shall be 600mm high and finished in local stone.
- Condition no. 22 requires the submission of details in relation to a management company responsible for the maintenance of all services, utilities, access roads, open spaces and other communal areas.
- Condition no. 23 requires the submission of proposals for a naming and numbering scheme for agreement with the P.A..
- Condition no. 25 requires details of the materials, colours and textures of the external finishes of the buildings to be submitted to the P.A. for agreement.
- Condition no. 26 requires the implementation of the landscaping, hardscaping and public realm works.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. Planning Reports

The Planner's Report assessment notes that Loughrea is classified as a 'self-sustaining town' in the CDP. Under the Loughrea LAP 2024-2030 it notes the zoning for 'residential (phase 1)'. It considered the development acceptable in principle. It noted a confirmation of feasibility letter from Uisce Éireann in relation to water and wastewater connection feasibility. It noted that the Traffic and Transport

Assessment noted the development will not adversely affect the capacity of the road network in the area.

It noted that the recommended density per DM Standard 2 is 15-25up at edge of centre/greenfield sites and 25uph at infill sites. The proposed density of 29uph was considered appropriate having regard to the prevailing pattern of development in the area. The design was considered compatible with CDP policy and with the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (Cities, Towns and Villages) DEHLG (2009). It was also satisfied with the unit mix in the scheme. It concluded noting that it would not seriously injure the amenities of the area or of property in the vicinity and would accord with proper planning and sustainable development principles and recommended that permission be granted.

3.2.2. Other Technical Reports

- Environment Section: No response received.
- Heritage Officer: No response received.
- Housing Section: No response received.
- Loughrea/Portumna Council Area Office: No response received.
- Roads Department: No response received.
- Water Section: No response received.

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

- The Heritage Council: No response received.
- Fáilte Ireland: No response received.
- Transport Infrastructure Ireland: Regard should be had to national guidance for spatial planning and national roads.
- An Taisce: No response received.
- Uisce Éireann: No objection subject to condition.

3.4. Third Party Observations

8 no. third party observations were received which can be summarised as follows:

- Congestion and traffic safety issues will result.

- There is a large volume of housing under construction or planned in the area.
- The connection with the adjoining Danesfort Court should be revised to a pedestrian only right of way.
- Vehicles passing through the adjacent estates will give rise to a heightened risk of crime and trespassing and will set an undesirable precedent.
- Overdevelopment will undermine the character and quality of the area.
- Absence of site sections showing development in relation to adjacent housing.
- Questions in relation to land levels and drainage.
- Any boundary changes should be required to be agreed with adjoining residents.
- The letter of support from Danesfort Residents Association is not representative of local residents' views.
- There has been a failure to comply with construction related conditions at the adjacent site.

4.0 Planning History

Subject Site

None.

Adjacent Site to West

21732: Permission refused by the P.A. and granted on appeal (ABP-310794-21) for development consisting of modifications to development permitted under Reg. Ref. 19/1673 and will comprise the provision of 32 no. residential dwellings in lieu of previously permitted 23 no. residential dwellings.

2260551: Permission granted by the P.A. for amendments to housing development previously permitted under Pl. Ref. No. 21/732 (An Bord Pleanála Case Ref. ABP-310794-21) on revised site boundaries. The development will consist of (1) Revisions to site boundary extent, (2) Minor revisions to the positioning of permitted unit No.'s 16-32, (3) Change of house plans to permitted unit No.'s 1-32, (4)

Revisions to boundary treatments and (5) Minor revisions to internal turning head layout, bin store provision, communal open space and parking layout.

Adjacent Site to South-East

259: Extension of duration permission granted by the P.A. for the construction of 42 No residential dwellings consisting of; 32 No. Type A - four bedroom semi-detached, 6 No. Type B - three bedroom semi-detached, 4 No. Type C - three bedroom terraced houses, vehicular entrance to site from Danesfort Drive, boundary treatments, public open space, provision of foul and surface water connection/disposal, site lighting and all associated site works. Ref 19/1672 as amended by Ref. No.'s 21/2229, 23/60323, 23/60957 & 23/61496.

2560297: Permission granted by the P.A. for internal alterations to change each of the 16 no. houses from 4 bedroomed units to 3 bedroomed units

5.0 Policy Context

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

Chapter 2 – Core Strategy, Settlement Strategy and Housing Strategy

Per Table 2.2 Loughrea is designated as a 'self-sustaining town' in the CDP.

- Policy Objective CS 2 – Compact Growth

To achieve compact growth through the delivery of new homes in urban areas within the existing built up footprint of settlements, by developing infill, brownfield and regeneration sites and prioritising underutilised land in preference to greenfield sites.

Table 2.11 identifies the quantities of greenfield and brownfield lands in Loughrea for residential development based on a density of 25uph.

Chapter 3 – Placemaking, Regeneration and Urban Living

- Policy Objective CRG 1 – Density

To require that all new development represents an efficient use of land and supports national policy objectives to achieve compact growth in towns and villages.

Development of lands with no links to the town or village centre will be discouraged.

- Policy Objective CRG 6 – Density

Promote the provision of higher density development in close proximity to sustainable transport corridors such as train stations.

- Policy Objective PM 10 – Design Quality

To require that new buildings are of exceptional architectural quality, and are fit for their intended use or function, durable in terms of design and construction, respectful of setting and the environment and to require that the overall development is of high quality, with a well-considered public realm.

Chapter 7 – Infrastructure, Utilities and Environmental Protection

- Policy Objective WW 11 – Surface Water Drainage

To prohibit the discharge of additional surface water to combined (foul and surface water) sewers in order to maximise the capacity of existing collection systems for foul water.

Chapter 8 – Tourism and 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.

Chapter 10 – Natural Heritage, Biodiversity and Green/Blue Infrastructure

- Policy Objective NBH 1 – Natural Heritage and Biodiversity of Designated Sites, Habitats and Species

This outlines support for the protection of European and other designated sites.

- Policy Objective NHB 3 – Protection of European Sites

*No plans, programmes, or projects etc. giving rise to significant cumulative, direct, indirect or secondary impacts on European sites arising from their size or scale, land take, proximity, resource requirements, emissions (disposal to land, water or air), transportation requirements, duration of construction, operation, decommissioning or from any other effects shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans, programmes, etc. or projects.**

- Policy Objective WR 1 – Water Resources

Protect the water resources in the plan area, including rivers, streams, lakes, wetlands, springs, turloughs, surface water and groundwater quality, as well as surface waters, aquatic and wetland habitats and freshwater and water dependant species in accordance with the requirements and guidance in the EU Water Framework Directive 2000(2000/60/EC), the European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (as amended), the River Basin District Management Plan 2018 – 2021 and other relevant EU Directives, including associated national legislation and policy guidance (including any superseding versions of same) and also have regard to the Freshwater Pearl Mussel Sub-Basin Management Plans.

Chapter 15 – Development Management Standards

- DM Standard 2: Multiple Housing Schemes (Urban Areas)

Town and Village Centre Infill Sites Development of infill and brownfield sites for residential or mixed use will be supported in suitable town and village centre locations. Such development must respect the character and appearance of the settlement and contribute to the delivery of good placemaking....

...Infill proposals should consider other site circumstances relating to:

- *The existing pattern of development, density, plot size, building height;*
- *Impact on residential amenity, daylight, loss of privacy, overlooking;*
- *The provision of private open space for existing and proposed properties;*
- *Car parking standards;*
- *Building orientation.*

A degree of flexibility may apply to infill sites who cannot facilitate certain standards, particularly if it contributes to sustainable compact development....

Chapter 15 Development Management

Density and Typology

Guidance relating to density is set out within the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Developments in Urban Areas. It is calculated simply by dividing the site area by the number of residential units proposed. Chapter 2 Core

Strategy, Settlement Strategy and Housing Strategy sets the standard density at 35 Dwellings Per Hectare. However, to achieve the aspirations of the NPF a higher density level may be applied at strategic locations with good access to public transport services. Higher density development will only be applied where appropriate and where a good standard of development is proposed.

Table 15.1 Residential Density

For self-sustaining towns, this provides for a density of 15 to 25 at edge of centre /greenfield locations. Below the table it states that “*All proposals shall be in accordance with the Sustainable Residential in Urban Areas 2009 and Circular 02/2021. Density is only one variable used in the assessment of development proposals*”.

- DM Standard 11 – Landscaping

‘Landscaping proposals should be submitted with all planning applications for development and shall include a schedule of indigenous native plant species and implementation timeline’.

- DM Standard 28 - Sight Distances Required for Access onto National, Regional, Local and Private Roads

Table 15.3: Sight Distances required for Access onto National, Regional and Local Roads

Vehicular entrances and exit points must be designed by the developer as part of a planning application with adequate provision for visibility so that drivers emerging from the access can enjoy good visibility of oncoming vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians. Where a new entrance is proposed, the Planning Authority must consider traffic conditions and available sight lines....

- DM Standard 47 - Field Patterns, Stone Walls, Trees and Hedgerows

Field patterns and associated stone walls, trees and hedgerows are an important part of the visual and environmental quality of rural areas and their removal and replacement with block walls and fencing leads to urban features in a rural environment. It can also have an effect on wildlife and lead to the removal of valuable hedgerows upon which wildlife depends. New developments will accordingly be subject to the following requirements in this regard:

- a) *Existing Features Retain and incorporate existing field patterns and associated stone walls, trees and hedgerows into new development layouts wherever feasible.*
- b) *Intervention In general, only the minimum interference with existing field patterns, stone walls, trees and hedges shall be permitted.*
- c) *Planting The Council will also encourage the planting of native trees and hedgerows along all boundaries.*
- d) *Hedgerows Include consideration of native hedgerow with post and rail fencing along roadside frontages where existing hedgerow is being removed. Employ the appropriate management methods for the maintenance of roadside habitats to minimise damage (in particular to hedges) and observe the hedge cutting closed season.*

Volume 2

10. Small Growth Villages

- Policy Objective SGV 1 – Residential Development Phasing

Support the development of lands designated as Residential (Phase 1) within the lifetime of the Plan, in compliance with the Core Strategy and subject to normal planning, access and servicing requirements, and reserve the lands designated as Residential (Phase 2) for the longer-term growth needs of each village...

5.2. **Loughrea Local Area Plan 2024-2030 (the LAP)**

The subject site is zoned 'Residential (Phase 1)'. The Policy Objective of Residential Phase 1 is *'to protect, provide and improve residential amenity areas within the lifetime of this plan'*. The description of this *'is to facilitate the provision of high-quality new residential developments at appropriate densities with layout and design well linked to the town centre and community facilities. To provide an appropriate mix of house sizes, types and tenures to meet household needs and promote balanced communities'*.

Section 2.2 relates to residential development. This states, inter alia, that *"The Phase 1 lands have been identified having regard to good planning principles such as the sequential approach (the identification of undeveloped lands closest to the town centre and existing established areas), potential pedestrian/cycle connectivity*

to the town centre, and the avoidance of flood risk and environmentally sensitive areas”.

Table 1 Core Strategy sets a density of 25uph for the purposes of calculating the land required for residential development as well as the number of unit to be delivered on infill/brownfield sites (based on Table 2.11 of the CDP)

Section 4.0 Policy Objectives

LSST 5 Residential Development Phasing

Support the development of lands designated as Residential (Phase 1) within the lifetime of the plan, subject to normal planning, access and servicing requirements, and reserve the lands designated as Residential (Phase 2) for the longer-term growth needs of Loughrea.

LSST 7 Sequential Development

Endeavour to promote the orderly and phased development of residential development in accordance with the principles of the sequential approach as set out in the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (Cities, Towns and Villages) Guidelines 2009 (or as updated). This shall include a positive presumption in favour of the sequential development of suitably serviced Residential Phase 1 lands emanating outwards from the town core and/or sequential extensions to the existing residential fabric of suitably serviced Residential Phase 1 lands within the LAP boundary, subject to the principles of proper planning and sustainable development and the current County Development Plan.

LSST 53 Local Transport Plan

Support the implementation of the Local Transport Plan as set out in Section 3 in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development.

LSST 56 Pedestrian and Cycle Network

Facilitate the improvement of the pedestrian and cycling environment and network so that it is safe and accessible to all, through the provision of the necessary infrastructure. New development shall promote and prioritise walking and cycling, shall be permeable, adequately linked and connected to neighbouring areas, the town centre, recreational, educational, residential and employment destinations and shall adhere to the principles contained within the national policy document Smarter

Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future 2009 - 2020 and the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2013), as updated in 2019 and NTA document Permeability: Best Practice Guide.

LSST 59 Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) and Road Safety Audits (RSA) Require all significant development proposals to be accompanied by a Road Safety Audit and Traffic & Transport Assessment carried out by suitably competent consultants, which are assessed in association with their cumulative impact with neighbouring developments on the road network, in accordance with the requirements contained within the TII's Traffic & Transport Assessment Guidelines (PE-PDV-02045) 2014 (including any updated/superseding document) and 'Road Safety Audit' (GE-STY-01024) December 2017.

Loughrea Local Transport Plan

WC 24 provides for on-street proposed walking and cycling measures along Danesfort Road and Caheronaun Park Road.

Connections to Future Zoned Land

As outlined previously in Section 4.3, the proposed LTP measures considered access to existing development but also took cognisance of the Loughrea land use zoning illustrated in Figure 25. This was to ensure that all future zoned land are served by strong active travel infrastructure to support the sustainable growth of Loughrea.

5.3. National Policy and Guidelines

Having regard to the nature of the proposed development and to the location of the appeal site, I consider the following Section 28 Ministerial guidelines to be particularly applicable to the assessment:

- *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024) (the Compact Settlement Guidelines).*
- *Regulation of Commercial Institutional Investment in Housing, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2021).*
- *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009)*

- *Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities – Best Practice Guidelines for Delivering Homes Sustaining Communities* (2007).

Other national guidelines of relevance include:

- *Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets* (2019) (DMURS).

5.4. **Natural Heritage Designations**

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

- c.1.1km north-east of Lough Rea SPA (site code 004134) and Lough Rea SAC (site code 000304).
- c.4.7km north of Slieve Aughty Mountains SPA (site code 004168).
- c.10km south of Raftord River Bog NHA (site code 000321).

6.0 **The Appeal**

6.1. **Grounds of Appeal**

The grounds of the third party appeal by Mary Barrett can be summarised as follows:

- The Traffic and Transport Assessment provided no measured traffic counts, queue length data or pedestrian analysis to support its findings.
- The TTA only modelled the Triantán an Aoill estate and excluded Ceathrú an Iarla and Danesfort Court contrary to the Act, traffic management guidelines and LAP objectives LSST 53 TO 59.
- Caheronaun Park Road leading to the N65 junction is inadequate for the combined traffic of multiple housing estates and footpaths are intermittent.
- There is a need for a corridor-wide cumulative traffic and junction capacity assessment. Permission should be refused or such analysis and Stage 2/3 Road Safety Audits should be required.
- The development will be dependent for access on adjacent private infrastructure contrary to DM Standards 11 and 28 and Policy Objective RDH 4 and LAP objective LSST 56.

- A unified masterplan is required and transport strategy for both estates before further permission or a condition requiring the adoption of the access road prior to occupation.
- A comprehensive road safety audit is requiring covering both estates given the issues identified in the RSA with no resolution shown.
- The proposed density of 29.1 uph exceeds the LAP range of 15 to 25 uph for edge of centre lands and this is contrary to LAP objectives LSST 5 & 7 and Policy Objective CRG 6 of the CDP.
- The open space does not cater for peripheral dwellings and needs to be redistributed to include smaller pocket parks.
- General conditions were used by the P.A. contrary to Section 34(4) of the Act.
- Specific conditions are required if permission is granted to request a full cumulative traffic assessment and RSA, legal confirmation of access rights and taking-in-charge certification and construction phasing to restrict HGV access until road adoption.

6.2. Applicant Response

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

- DM Standards 11 and 28 are irrelevant to the consideration of this case and there is no Policy Objective RDH4 of the Development Plan.
- The 2022 population of Loughrea is 6,322 which brings it into the category of a key/large town in the Compact Settlement Guidelines for which a density range of 30 to 50uph is recommended for suburban/urban extensions.
- The density is reasonable given the layout and typology of the existing housing on the adjoining sites and compliments the emerging density and character of the area.
- Per Section 28 of the 2000 Act, ACP shall have regard to the Compact Settlement Guidelines.
- The net density is higher than 29.1uph per Appendix B of the Compact Settlement Guidelines where areas of land that cannot be developed due to environmental sensitivities can be excluded from the net site area.

- If the mature hedgerow area adjacent to the N65 is excluded from the site area, then the density would be 30.89uph.
- The Planner's Report in relation to the open space confirmed the development was designed around it and that it was adequately overlooked consistent with the 2009 and 2024 guidelines.
- The open space is consistent with the qualitative standards for new developments of DM Standards 1 and 2 of the Development Plan and LSST 26 of the LAP does not specifically refer to the design and location of open space.
- DM Standard 11 in relation to landscaping was dealt with by the submitted Landscaping Layout and Condition no. 26 requirements will be complied with.
- The c.15% of public open space accords with the 2024 guidelines, the Development Plan and the LAP.
- The permissions at Triantán an Aoill to the west and Ceathrú and Iarla to the south were originally granted in March 2020 and both were fully assessed for all possible impacts, including traffic.
- The adjoining developments are well connected to each other by road and footpath with each having their own functional open space areas.
- The sites are relatively small with no requirement for a masterplan and at no time was such requested.
- The TTA addresses the cumulative impacts in a satisfactory manner and concludes that the proposed development will not adversely affect the capacity of the road network in the area.
- All the Stage 1 RSA measures were incorporated into the design submitted. Condition no. 6 requires a Stage RSA be submitted prior to commencement which will ensure road safety issues are addressed per standard practice.
- Given the letter of consent for access to Danesfort Court submitted with the appeal, there is no need for a condition to further substantiate same
- In relation to taking in charge, condition no.s 8, 14, 15, and 20 are applicable with condition no. 15 requiring certification of each phase.

- In relation to HGV access, an updated Construction Traffic Management Plan was submitted and Section 7 of the TTA relates to construction stage traffic including mitigation measures such that no safety concerns arise.
- HGV access will only be required for the initial phase and will be via the temporary construction access road to the west as permitted under reg. ref. 25/61216 (this avoids the need for construction traffic to go through Danesfort Court) and the appellant's condition will frustrate the development.
- A detailed response letter from CST Group Chartered Consulting Engineers is attached which predominantly relates to the issues summarised above and also includes the following:
 - The TTA was based on a 12-hour traffic count carried out on Thursday 8th May 2025 in accordance with TII guidelines and it counted two nearby junctions. Details were provided in Appendices A and C.
 - In relation to queue length, the maximum length predicted by the PICADY model of 4 cars was confirmed in the peak AM hour.
 - A pedestrian generation table is provided which shows a maximum of 17 pedestrians per hour associated with the cumulative development.
 - The appeal acknowledges that the TTA modelled the Triantán an Aoill estate but incorrectly states that Carthrú an Iarla was excluded. Table 5.1 included it and Danesfort Court traffic flows were already included in the traffic count as this development was operational at the time. All cumulative development along the Caheronaun Park corridor is catered for in the TTA.
 - Caheronaun Park road complies with the minimum width for an arterial /link street being at least 6m wide throughout and there is continuous footpath along it from the development towards Loughrea town centre.
 - The CTMP will mitigate the impact of construction traffic in the vicinity of the appellant's residence and along Caheronaun Park.
 - Both Stage 2 and Stage 3 road safety audits are already conditioned in the Council's decision.

- The development is very permeable being connected to Triantán an Aoill and Danesfort Park which are linked to the town centre.
- All of the Stage 1 RSA recommendations were accepted and this was shown via the submitted 'Road Safety Audit Recommendations Layout Plan'.

6.3. Further Responses

The third party appellant submitted a response to the applicant's appeal response and this response can be summarised as follows:

- It is acknowledged that the TTA was informed by a 12-hour traffic count and cumulative trips in the vicinity were covered.
- The TTA did not explicitly assess safety at existing private front accesses during queueing, associated visibility impairment and driver behaviour and these are material planning considerations.
- It is not possible to conclude that the proposed development would not adversely affect road safety as required by Section 34(3) of the 2000 Act.
- While the applicant may have legal entitlement to access, the planning issue is whether safety of this access is secured by clear, enforceable, pre-occupation triggers and reliance on future measures is unacceptable to demonstrate access safety.
- In relation to density and national guidance allowing for flexibility, this must be supported by robust infrastructure and mobility justification.
- The appeal discloses unresolved issues that merit refusing permission.
- If the Board is minded to grant permission, 4 no. conditions are required in relation to a site specific independent frontage access safety assessment addressing sightlines and manoeuvrability under peak hours, a clear no occupation requirement until the primary access route and internal network are provided, explicit construction traffic routing, timing and monitoring conditions and a post-occupation road safety review at defined thresholds and requirements to implement mitigation and remedial measures.

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
- Density
- Layout and Design
- Infrastructure
- Other Matters

7.2. Principle of Development

7.2.1. I note that the subject site is zoned 'Residential (Phase 1)' under the LAP. The Policy Objective of Residential Phase 1 is *'to protect, provide and improve residential amenity areas within the lifetime of this plan'*. The description of this *'is to facilitate the provision of high-quality new residential developments at appropriate densities with layout and design well linked to the town centre and community facilities. To provide an appropriate mix of house sizes, types and tenures to meet household needs and promote balanced communities'*. I note the residential use proposed consisting of 31 no. two bedroom and 24 no. three bedroom dwellings.

7.2.2. Accordingly, I consider the proposed residential development of 55 no. houses to align with the zoning objective for the site, being consistent with residential amenity in use terms. Based on my below assessment, I consider that the proposed development would be high quality at appropriate density and with a well linked layout and design. It would provide a balanced mix of units, with a sizeable number of two bedroom units, in a wider area where three plus bedroom units are more common. I consider this approach acceptable in terms of the zoning of the site under the LAP.

7.3. Access

- 7.3.1. I note the appellant has raised issues in relation to the access arrangement and traffic and the submitted Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) prepared by CST Group Chartered Consulting Engineers. In her response to the appeal response, the appellant acknowledged that the TTA was informed by a traffic survey which took place on Thursday 8th May 2025 which I consider to be reasonably representative. I note that it provided for the adjacent under construction housing estates and that it included the Danesfort Drive to the south such that I consider the TTA deals adequately with cumulative impact as required.
- 7.3.2. I note the Caheronaun Park distributor road would provide access to the development from the N65 to the north and from the town to the south. I note that the TTA traffic survey found no significant traffic issues along this road with a maximum queue of 4 cars noted at the N65 junction and I note no concerns in relation to future projected vehicle numbers. I note the safety concerns of the appellant in this regard particularly in relation to the direct vehicular from her dwelling on to the public road. I note this is an established access point along the road with good visibility in both directions and within a 50kph speed zone.
- 7.3.3. Based on the projected traffic levels and impact outlined in the TTA, and the findings of the RSA, I have no significant concerns in relation to road safety impacts along Caheronaun Park road. I note the P.A. had no road safety concerns in this regard. I note the TTA conclusion that the existing and proposed priority-controlled junctions would operate below recommended capacity (85%) for uncontrolled development with all development in place for all future years and that by 2043 the N65 / Caheronaun Park T-junction would operate at 80% capacity in the AM peak hour and at 51% during the PM peak hour and that the T-junction access on to Caheronaun Park road would operate at 19% capacity in the AM peak hour and at 13% in the PM peak hour.
- 7.3.4. I also note that in light of the appeal a pedestrian generation table was provided which shows no more than 17 pedestrians passing per hour for the cumulative development. I note that as part of the adjacent development to the west, there would be footpath access via it along the main distributor road towards the town. There would also be access to the south from within the development to the adjacent

Danesfort Court such that I consider pedestrian connections as well as road connections to be satisfactory in terms of impacts on the adjacent road network.

- 7.3.5. In relation to the submitted Stage 1 Road Safety Audit prepared by CST Group Chartered Consulting Engineers I note that 4 problems were found with recommendations made and it can be ensured that these are incorporated into the design via condition and a stage 2 and stage 3 RSA can be required by using the conditions applied by the P.A. in this regard. Having reviewed the internal road layout of the scheme, I am satisfied that the approach of the P.A. and its conditions (no.s 3, 4, 5, 6, 7) are satisfactory to ensure a level of road safety consistent with DMURS as required. Contrary to the concerns of the appellant, I consider such conditions to be enforceable, reasonable and standard practice. I note this would be consistent with DM Standard 28 of the CDP and with LSST 56 and LSST 59 of the CDP.
- 7.3.6. I note that taking in charge can be provided for consistent with the approach of the P.A. and as provided for in Condition no.s 8, 14, 15 and 20 of its decision and should permission be granted I recommend the application of these conditions or similar.
- 7.3.7. In relation to construction traffic and the concerns of the appellant particularly in relation to HGV vehicles, a local resident opposite the site, I note the submitted 'Updated Construction Traffic Management Plan' prepared by Clarke Construction Design Ltd. I also note that under reg. ref. 25/61216 the permission granted provides for construction access via the adjacent site to the west. I note the application is also for the retention of temporary on-site construction compound with associated internal roadway and areas for storage. I note this would avoid the need for access via Danesfort Court and that as advised by the applicant appeal response HGV access would only be required for the initial phase.
- 7.3.8. I note the mitigation measures proposed for construction access including the erection of flash traffic lights for traffic controls, road works and deliveries between 09.30am and 4.30pm only, the daily cleaning of debris on public highways and the use of signage and road cones. I also note Section 7 of the TTA provides for mitigation measures including wheel washers/judder bars to clean off vehicles exiting the site.

- 7.3.9. The TTA report concludes that with the mitigation measures that no road safety concerns or significant environmental degradation would arise. I note that the P.A. had no significant issues with this approach and that this is effectively standard procedure such that I do not consider the appellant's suggested conditions to be required. I am satisfied that this is a reasonable approach subject to the inclusion of the conditions applied by the P.A. and a construction management plan in relation to the requirements for the measures outlined to be implemented.
- 7.3.10. I note the car parking maximum standard per Table 15.5 of the CDP is 1.5 spaces per dwelling. I note that per the site layout plan there would be two spaces per dwelling with 8 exceptions where there would be one space per dwelling. This would result in a total number of 102 spaces and there would be 4 spaces around the open space giving a combined total of 106 space or 1.92 spaces per dwelling. I note the DM Standard 31(d) allows flexibility in relation to the standards where *"a case is substantiated, there is no traffic safety issue, and it is clearly demonstrated to the Planning Authority in the interest of proper planning and development, that the standard should be adjusted to facilitate the site specific context"*.
- 7.3.11. Noting that the car parking standard is a maximum and in the absence of a case being made for exceedance of the CDP standard, I recommend that the level of car parking provision be reduced by condition to comply with the CDP standards. In order to be consistent with the CDP, should permission be granted I recommend a condition to require the level of car parking provision be reduced to comply with the CDP standards, i.e. to a maximum total of 82 spaces. This can be achieved by omitting the 4 no. car parking spaces within/adjacent to the public open space area and by omitting a further 24 no. spaces from the scheme.

7.4. Density

- 7.4.1. I note the appellant has raised concerns in relation to the proposed density not being consistent with planning policy where the LAP range should be 15 to 25 for edge of centre lands. I note the site area is 1.89ha. and that 55 no. dwellings are proposed such that the gross density would be 29.1uph. I note the applicant's appeal response that by excluding the northern line of hedgerow, the net density would be 30.9uph. This, it is stated, is consistent with Appendix B of the Compact Settlement Guidelines. Having reviewed this, I note this rationale consistent with the guidelines

whereby areas of land that cannot be developed due to environmental sensitivities can be excluded.

- 7.4.2. I note that consistent with the CDP Table 2.11, that the LAP (Table 1) sets a density of 25 uph for the purpose of calculating its population targets. In my opinion this approach does not set a mandatory standard of density as it is effectively providing for population targets for the core strategy of the CDP. However, I note that Table 15.1 of the CDP sets a density range of 15 to 25uph for such a self-sustaining town such that I consider the proposed density would materially contravene this policy of the CDP.
- 7.4.3. Having regard to Section 37(2)(a) of the 2000 Act as amended I note the Commission has the power to grant permission where a proposed development materially contravenes the development plan. I consider there to be a planning case in this instance for the higher density proposed such that in my view this is not an issue that merits a refusal of permission. I note this having regard to the 2009 guidelines which are incorporated into the CDP where these provide, in small towns and villages, for densities in a range of 20 to 25uph for edge of centre sites. (Section 6.11) and I note a general requirement to be consistent with the character of the surrounding area which I consider would be the case. I am satisfied that the higher density is merited noting that the increase of density would be c.16% above the maximum of the density range which I consider to be a relatively low increase, and that it would provide for the increased housing supply and population growth in a compact form in line with the National Planning Framework (First Revision) and noting the designation of the site as Phase 1 residential lands under the LAP.
- 7.4.4. Furthermore noting also the Compact Settlement Guidelines and that the population of Loughrea was noted to be 6,322 in the 2022 census, the policy is for densities to be in the range of 30uph to 50uph in the suburban/urban extension areas of the key towns. Having regard to this, while I note the proposed density would be at the lower end of the range, considering that the character of the scheme would be consistent with the receiving environment and the more than adequate surrounding infrastructure, I note no conflict with these guidelines which would also support not refusing permission in relation to the density. There a material contravention of Table 15.1 of the CDP would be justified in my opinion.

7.5. Layout and Design

- 7.5.1. I note the concerns of the appellant that a masterplan is required for the development. I note the proposed housing and street layout around and mainly facing a central area of open space and with good two storey enclosure given the proposed position of the dwellings directly facing the streets and open space. I consider this would provide good passive surveillance of the public realm. I note that the street layout is required to accord with DMURS, for example road widths would be 5.5m and footpaths would be c.2m wide.
- 7.5.2. Noting that the dwellings would be lined up with limited variety in design such that strong streetscapes would be created with some visual interest achieved by the variety between terrace and semi-detached dwellings and by the type C part gable fronted dwellings at the end of the three main rows. This combined with the links to adjacent estates would provide healthy placemaking in my opinion and would be consistent with DM Standard 2 in terms of layout and design impacts. I do not consider a masterplan to be required given this would be the final phase of development with the adjacent site to the west and south already permitted and under construction and noting the good links with these developments and the surrounding area.
- 7.5.3. I note the site would be required to be levelled somewhat due to the mounded area at the south-west end. I note the housing typology, mainly two storey pitched roof terraced and semi-detached houses, is reasonably similar in form and scale to that permitted and under construction to the south and would in my opinion be similar in form and scale to the Danesfort Court estate to the south. In my opinion the design of the two storey dwellings would integrate with the site and the mainly residential surroundings while providing an appropriate edge to the town south of the N65.
- 7.5.4. I note that the internal floor areas of the proposed houses would exceed the minimum standards required (minimum two bed floor area would be 84sqm (type D) and minimum three bed floor area would be 102sqm (type C)) and would accord with the 2007 guidelines (Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities, Table 5.1). I note that the unit mix would consist of 24 no. three bedroom units (c.43.5%) and 31 no. two bedroom units (c.56.5%) which I have previously noted I consider to be acceptable. I note the application has indicatively outlined which units in the scheme

could be used for Part V social and affordable housing and I note this would be broadly evenly distributed throughout the scheme to integrate with the estate.

- 7.5.5. I note the appellant has raised concerns in relation to the scheme layout particularly in relation to the open space and its distribution within the scheme. I note that the main area of public open space would be centrally located within the scheme and would be enclosed by the proposed streets with passive surveillance from the dwellings. There would also be a playground within the space. I note that this would accord with best urban design practice, place making principles and, contrary to the appellant, I have no significant concerns that any of the dwellings would be located excessively far away from this space. I note that the estate would also be well connected to the adjacent estates to the west and south which include provision for quality open space areas.
- 7.5.6. The central area would consist of 2,602sqm and the area in the north-east corner of the scheme would be 334sqm but owing to its size would not function as high quality useable open space in my opinion. It would have a marginal use perhaps as a small play or exercise area and in relation to providing attractive outdoor space. The central area would be c.13.7% of the site area and including the north-east corner area the total area would be 15.5%. In my opinion this would be reasonably consistent with DM Standard 2 (Multiple Housing Schemes (Urban Areas)) which has no minimum quantitative requirement for public open space and its provisions which allow for flexibility for the provision of high quality public open space. I note the Compact Settlement Guidelines provide for a 10% to 15% range (Policy Objective 5.1) and the scheme would be consistent with this standard.
- 7.5.7. In relation to separation distances, I note DM Standard 2 of the CDP provides for 22m rear separation distances to ensure privacy, sunlight and avoid undue overlooking. I have no significant concerns in this regard given the scale of development and separation distances from the existing houses at Danesfort Court and between the permitted development to the south and west. I note this would be achieved as demonstrated on the Site Layout Plan. I also note that adequate rear quality private open space would be provided for each dwelling in accordance with CDP policy which provides for no minimum requirements in this regard.

- 7.5.8. I note the submitted Landscape Plans include provision for mainly grass for the open space areas within the scheme with a small number of trees proposed including Acer Mophead Maple, Himalayan Birch and Franz Fontaine species. In layout terms I consider this approach appropriate to allow for the usability of the open spaces as well as contributing to their attractiveness. However, similar to the P.A. I consider that further detail in this regard should be agreed with the P.A. to ensure the incorporation of native species planting within the scheme. Should permission be granted I recommend a condition to this effect.
- 7.5.9. In relation to the site boundaries, I note that the existing northern roadside hedgerow would be retained and the southern wall would be mainly retained except for the link to the Danesfort Drive housing estate. I note the 1.1m high plastered walls are to be provided to separate the sides of the front driveways as well as 0.6m high natural stone walls at various side ends of front drives. There would be 1.8m high concrete post with concrete panels separating the rear garden sides and 1.8 high block wall capped and plastered on the exposed faces for the rear garden boundaries. I note that 1.8m high natural stone walls are proposed to face the streets at other boundaries within the scheme including the north-east boundary and the links to the adjacent estates. I consider this to be a high quality approach to integrate the scheme with the site and surroundings.

7.6. Infrastructure

- 7.6.1. I note the site location within flood zone C such that I have no flood risk concerns. I note the Pre-Connection letter from Uisce Éireann which confirms that water and wastewater connections are feasible without infrastructure upgrade. I also note the Consultant Engineers Civil, Structural and Environment report prepared by Clarke Construction Design Ltd which confirms the feasibility of these connections via the under construction Triantán an Aoill housing estate.
- 7.6.2. I note this report also noted that the public lighting locations and illumination radii comply with the Council's taking in charge document and will connect with the lighting scheme for Triantán an Aoill to the west. The report also noted that, via SUDS measures on the site, including soak pit via petrol interceptor, that surface water drainage can be catered for on the site. Subject to standard conditions, I am satisfied in relation to these matters.

7.7. New Issue – Childcare provision

- 7.7.1. I note that no childcare facility has been proposed as part of the proposed development for 55 no. houses. The Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities require one such facility per 75 dwellings with one facility requiring a minimum of 20 childcare places. Policy Objective CF 3 of the CDP requires the provision of creche facilities for residential developments in line with these 2001 guidelines. When combined with the adjacent permitted housing under construction, this would bring the total number of houses to 129 from 74 no. units (32 units permitted to the west and 42 permitted to the south-east (see Section 4.0 History above). I note the applicant has not submitted a report in relation to same seeking to justify or explain the absence of such childcare provision within the scheme.
- 7.7.2. On this basis there is a requirement for a childcare facility for c.34 childcare spaces for the cumulative development which would be 129 units. I consider that the provision of a childcare facility in the scheme would constitute a material change to the scheme and that this is not amenable to condition. Accordingly, I consider that the proposed development would materially contravene Policy Objective CF 3 of the CDP. I note that this is a new issue and the Commission may wish to seek the views of the parties. Based on the information before me, I recommend that permission be refused in relation to this issue as, in my view, it materially contravenes Policy Objective CF 3 of the CDP given the significant scale by which this policy would be contravened.

7.8. Other Matters

- 7.8.1. I note the location of the appellant's dwelling opposite the Triantán an Aoill estate to the west such that as previously noted above in relation to construction and traffic and associated impacts and I have no significant concerns and given the separation distance from this dwelling and the intervening permitted development I have no significant concerns in relation to impacts on residential amenity on this or other dwellings in the vicinity from the construction phase or operational phase of development. In order to ensure no undue impacts arise, I recommend that similar construction and traffic related conditions to those applied by the P.A. be included should permission be granted.

- 7.8.2. I note the appellant has raised concerns in relation to inconsistencies with Section 34(3) and 34(4) of the 2000 Act as amended. Having reviewed these sections and based on my above and below assessment, I have no significant concerns in this regard.
- 7.8.3. Should permission be granted I note that Part V is applicable and that the regulations in relation to commercial institutional investment are applicable such that I recommend conditions in relation to both and in relation to the requirement for development contributions to be paid.

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 1 and 2 of this report). Having regard to the characteristics and location of the proposed development and the types and characteristics of 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 AA Screening

- 9.1. See Appendix 3 for detailed AA Screening. 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 the proposed development individually or in combination with other plans or projects would not be likely to give rise to significant effects on Lough Rea SPA (site code 004134) and Lough Rea SAC (site code 000304) in view of the conservation objectives of these sites and is therefore excluded from further consideration. Appropriate Assessment is not required.
- 9.2. This determination is based on:
- The absence of any direct hydrological connectivity between the site and the European sites.

- The distance to the European sites and the urban intervening landscape and habitats.
- In relation to bird species identified as qualifying interests of the SPA, due to the built-up intervening urban environment, along with the absence of intervisibility between the application site and the SPA.
- The location within a serviced urban area with available capacity noted at Loughrea WWTP.
- The screening determination of the Planning Authority.

10.0 Water Framework Directive

- 10.1. I note designated waterbodies 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 4 in relation to impacts related to the requirements of the Water Framework Directive. Noting the surface water drainage design measures and proposed connections to the public water and wastewater network, I have concluded that it can be ruled out that the proposed development will not pose a risk to surface and ground water bodies.
- 10.2. Given the position above the GWDTE-Rahasane Turlough (SAC000322) groundwater body (code IE_WE_G_0100) and the c.200m distance to the Kilcolgan_020 (Code IE_WE_29K010200) river water body and c.655m from the Kilcolgan_010 (Code IE_WE_29K010100) river water body, 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 note the material contravention of the County Development Plan I have identified in relation to the proposed density which I do not consider merits a refusal of

permission and which I have noted I consider to be justified in planning terms.
Nevertheless I recommend that permission be refused for the reason stated below.

12.0 Reasons and Considerations

1. Having regard to the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 and to Policy Objective CF 3 of same which requires the provision of childcare facilities for residential developments in line with these 2001 Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities where the threshold for such provision applies at and above 75 units, that the proposed development would result in a cumulative development of 129 units which is significantly over 75 units when combined with the permitted residential development adjacent to the west and south-east with no such childcare provision, it is considered that this would materially contravene Policy Objective CF 3 of the Development Plan. The proposed development, would therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

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 me, directly or indirectly, following my professional assessment and recommendation set out in my report in an improper or inappropriate way.

Ciarán Daly

Planning Inspector

27th February 2026

Appendix 1

Form 1 - EIA Pre-Screening

Case Reference	PL-500239-GY-25
Proposed Development Summary	Construction of 55 no. houses and all ancillary works.
Development Address	Caheronaun & Caherwalter, Loughrea, County 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)	Class 10(b)(i) Construction of more than 500 dwelling units, and (iv) Urban development which would involve an area greater than 2 hectares in the case of a business district, 10 hectares in the case of other parts of a built-up area and 20 hectares elsewhere. Construction of 55 dwellings on a site area of 1.89ha (site is within "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-500239-GY-25
Proposed Development Summary	Construction of 55 no. houses and all ancillary works.
Development Address	Caheronaun & Caherwalter, Loughrea, County 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. Retention of temporary on-site construction compound and associated internal roadway and storage areas.. Construction of 55 dwellings on a site area of 1.89ha. Connection to public water and sewer network.
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 edge of town site is remote from sensitive designated sites with built-up area between the site and such sites. No significant loss of trees or plants is proposed with the site consisting mainly of grassland AND gravel/stone areas. Capacity available at Loughrea WWTP with potential spare capacity and capacity confirmed by Uisce Éireann pre-connection letters. No sites of historic, cultural or archaeological significance noted.
Types and characteristics of potential impacts (Likely significant effects on environmental parameters, magnitude and spatial extent, nature of impact, transboundary, intensity and	Having regard to the characteristics of the development and the sensitivity of its location, consider the potential for SIGNIFICANT effects, not just effects. Nature of the development with no significant pollution at construction or operational stages.

complexity, duration, cumulative effects and opportunities for mitigation).	Negligible addition to wastewater treatment system, capacity available at Loughrea WWTP. Temporary emissions during construction. No significant operational impacts.
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 Determination Template

Test for likely significant effects

Screening for Appropriate Assessment Test for likely significant effects				
Step 1: Description of the project and local site characteristics				
Brief description of project	Construction of 55 no. houses and all ancillary works.			
Brief description of development site characteristics and potential impact mechanisms	Largely grassland site with some hardstanding gravel/stone areas remote from watercourses so impact mechanisms highly limited.			
Screening report	Y - Appropriate Assessment Screening Report prepared by Enviroplan Consulting Limited (August 2025) (Edel Hardiman BSc and James O' Donnell BA, MRUP, Dip APM prepared).			
Natura Impact Statement	None.			
Relevant submissions	None.			
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 Rea SPA (site code 004134)	Coot (Fulica atra) [A125] Shoveler (Spatula clypeata) [A857] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] Conservation Objectives by NPWS examined were dated 17 th January 2025	c.1.1km	Indirect potential connection via groundwater and via public sewers connecting onwards to Loughrea WWTP. No surface water bodies pass through the site.	Yes

Lough Rea SAC (site code 000304).	Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp. [3140] Conservation Objectives by NPWS were dated 1 st July 2019	c.1.1km	Indirect potential connection via groundwater and via public sewers connecting onwards to Ballina WWTP. No surface water bodies pass through the site.	Yes

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

³if no connections: N

Step 3. Describe the likely effects of the project (if any, alone or 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 Rea SPA (site code 004134) Coot (Fulica atra) [A125] Shoveler (Spatula clypeata) [A857] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	Direct: None. Indirect: Potential surface water run-off and dust run-off during construction. Potential foul water network impact at operational stage.	Noting the distance to the SPA, the absence of any surface water connection from the site, connection to and absence of a significant increased loading to Loughrea WWTP and the dilution through distance, no significant effects anticipated. Quoting from the submitted AA Screening Report, <i>"Given the significant distance and the built-up intervening urban environment, along with the absence of intervisibility between the application site and the SPA, it is considered that the proposed</i>

		<i>development is not expected to have an impact on any of the Bird species associated with the Lough Rea SPA during the operational phase". Also this is stated in relation to the construction phase.</i>
	Likelihood of significant effects from proposed development (alone): No	
	If No, is there likelihood of significant effects occurring in combination with other plans or projects? No, while other plans and projects were accounted for in the Screening Report, no other effects of magnitude were noted that could create an additional/cumulative effect.	
	Impacts	Effects
Site 2: Lough Rea SAC (site code 000304). Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp. [3140]	Direct: None. Indirect: Potential surface water run-off and dust run-off during construction. Potential foul water network impact at operation stage.	Noting the distance to the SAC, the absence of any surface water connection from the site, connection to and absence of a significant increased loading to Loughrea WWTP and the dilution through distance, no significant effects anticipated.
	Likelihood of significant effects from proposed development (alone): No	
	If No, is there likelihood of significant effects occurring in combination with other plans or projects? No, while other plans and projects were accounted for in the Screening Report, no other effects of magnitude were noted that could create an additional/cumulative effect.	
Step 4 Conclude if the proposed development could result in likely significant effects on a European site		
I conclude that the proposed development (alone) would not result in likely significant effects on Lough Rea SPA (site code 004134), and Lough Rea SAC (site code 000304). The proposed development would have no likely significant effect in combination with other plans and projects on any European sites. No further assessment is required for the project. No mitigation measures are required to come to these conclusions.		

Screening Determination

Finding of no likely significant effects

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 the proposed development individually or in combination with other plans or projects would not be likely to give rise to significant effects on Lough Rea SPA (site code 004134), and Lough Rea SAC (site code 000304) in view of the conservation objectives of these sites and is therefore excluded from further consideration. Appropriate Assessment is not required.

This determination is based on:

- The absence of any direct hydrological connectivity between the site and the European sites.
- The distance to the European sites and the urban intervening landscape and habitats.
- In relation to bird species identified as qualifying interests of the SPA, due to the *built-up* intervening urban environment, along with the absence of intervisibility between the application site and the SPA.
- The location within a serviced urban area with available capacity noted at Loughrea WWTP.
- The screening determination of the Planning Authority.

Appendix 4

Water Framework Directive Screening and Assessment

WFD IMPACT ASSESSMENT STAGE 1: SCREENING			
Step 1: The proposed development is for the construction of 55 no. houses and all ancillary works. . Site Area 1.89ha Total floor area 5,353sqm The site is within a serviced urban area with available treatment capacity noted at Loughrea WWTP. There are no surface water bodies running through the site. There is one river water body c.200m to the north the Kilcolgan_020 (Code IE_WE_29K010200) river water body noted to be of “poor” status and c.655m to the south-west of the Kilcolgan_010 (Code IE_WE_29K010100) river water body noted to be of “moderate” status. The site is above the above the GWDTE-Rahasane Turlough (SAC000322) groundwater body (code IE_WE_G_0100) noted to be of “good” status.			
An Bord Pleanála ref. no.	PL-500239-GY-25	Townland, address	Caheronaun & Caherwalter, Loughrea, County Galway.
Description of project		The proposed development consists the construction of 55 no. houses and all ancillary works.	

Brief site description, relevant to WFD Screening,	The majority of the site slopes uphill towards the north, there is an elevated area in the south-west corner and with the GWDTE-Rahasane Turlough (SAC000322) groundwater body underneath the site and the Kilcolgan_020 (Code IE_WE_29K010200) river water body is c.200m to the north and c.655m to the south-west of the Kilcolgan_010 (Code IE_WE_29K010100). The site is surrounded by urban development to the east, west and south, and to the north opposite the N65 is a rural area. The proposed urban development would be located at a remove from the above water bodies with connections proposed to the public water and wastewater network and SUDS measures proposed in relation to surface water drainage.
Proposed surface water details	SUDS measures are proposed including a soakaway.
Proposed water supply source & available capacity	Public network connection feasible without infrastructure upgrades noted by Uisce Eireann submitted letters.

Proposed wastewater treatment system & available capacity, other issues			Public wastewater network with potential spare capacity noted at the Loughrea WWTP.			
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.200m to the north, with intervening	Kilcolgan_020 (Code IE_WE_29K010200)	Poor	At risk.	Pressures from nutrient run-off from adjacent lands, impact of	Potentially via surface run-off and groundwater.

	road and rural area.				discharges from urban wastewater and associated network overflows , and septic tanks which can harm fish and other aquatic life.	
River Waterbody	c.655m to the south-west, with intervening urban lands.	Kilcolgan_010 (Code IE_WE_29K010100) river water body	Moderate	At risk.	Pressures from nutrient run-off from adjacent agricultural lands and from run-off	Potentially via surface run-off and groundwater.

					from paved surfaces in urban areas, impact of discharges from private WWTPs which can harm fish and other aquatic life.	
Groundwater Waterbody	Underlying site	GWDTE-Rahasane Turlough (SAC000322)	Good	At risk.	Pressures from nutrient run-off from adjacent agricultural lands, impact of discharges from private WWTPs	Surface run-off to groundwater.

		(code IE_WE_G_01 00)			which can harm fish and other aquatic life. Highly sensitive to phosphorous .	
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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	Kilcolgan_020 (Code IE_WE_29 K010200)	No direct link with intervening rural land and public network drainage systems.	Siltation, pH (Concrete), hydrocarbon spillages	Standard construction best practice	No	Screened out
2.	Surface	Kilcolgan_010 (Code IE_WE_29 K010100) river water body	No direct link with intervening urban land and public network drainage systems.	Siltation, pH (Concrete), hydrocarbon spillages	Standard construction best practice	No	Screened out
3.	Ground	GWDTE-Rahasane Turlough (SAC0003 22) (code IE_WE_G_0100)	Pathway exists	Spillages.	As above	No	Screened out

OPERATIONAL PHASE							
4.	Surface	Kilcolgan_020 (Code IE_WE_29 K010200)	No direct link with intervening rural land and public network drainage systems	No link to water body given design and infrastructure proposed.	Use of SUDS measures. Connection to mains water and wastewater infrastructure	No	Screened out
5.		Kilcolgan_010 (Code IE_WE_29 K010100) river water body	No direct link with intervening urban land and public network drainage systems	No link to water body given design and infrastructure proposed.	Use of SUDS measures. Connection to mains water and wastewater infrastructure	No	Screened out
6.	Ground	GWDTE-Rahasane Turlough (SAC0003 22)	Pathway exists	Potential link to water body via surface water draining to ground.	Potential link could give rise to risk.	Yes	Screened in

		(code IE_WE_G_ 0100)					
DECOMMISSIONING PHASE							
5.	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:</u> <u>Groundwater</u> Prevent or limit the input of pollutants into groundwater and to prevent the deterioration of the	<u>Objective 2 :</u> <u>Groundwater</u> Protect, enhance and restore all bodies of groundwater, ensure a balance between	<u>Objective 3:Groundwater</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			

	status of all bodies of groundwater	abstraction and recharge, with the aim of achieving good status*		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 Activity 6: Operation phase, groundwater	Use of SUDS measures. Surface water drainage measures would ensure no increase in surface water run-off by comparison with existing situation.	Connection to public network for wastewater treatment with potential capacity at Loughrea WWTP.	Connection to public network for wastewater treatment with potential capacity at Loughrea WWTP.	Yes
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	Connection to public network for wastewater treatment.			
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