Inspector's Report
PL-500244-LK-25

Development	Construction of industrial unit to include two warehouse units and associated site works. A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) was submitted with the application.
Location	Cloughacloka Road, Raheen Business Park, Limerick
Planning Authority	Limerick City and County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	25/60418
Applicant	Gerry Reynolds
Type of Application	Planning Permission
Planning Authority Decision	Notification of Grant
Type of Appeal	Third Party
Appellant	Tom Ryan
Observer(s)	None
Date of Site Inspection	19th February 2026
Inspector	Gary Farrelly

1.0 Site Location and Description

1.1. The subject site has a stated area of 1.21 hectares and is located within the Raheen Industrial Estate/Business Park. This estate is located approximately 3.5km southwest of Limerick City Centre. The site itself is located within the southwest corner of the estate, northwest of the existing Takumi Precision Engineering facility. The site is bounded to the southwest by the M20 motorway on/off ramp as well as a watercourse known as the Barnakyle river. The Barnakyle river is hydrologically connected to the Lower River Shannon Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (Site Code 002165) and the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries Special Protection Area (SPA) (Site Code 004077) approximately 8km downstream.

1.2. The topography of the site ranges from 7.9 metres Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) to 10.4 metres AOD and sections of the site are located within fluvial Flood Zones A and B as per the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment Management (CFRAM) maps for the mid-range future scenario (MRFS). The site is underlain by an existing piped storm and foul water network that serves the existing industrial estate. The existing stormwater network within the site currently discharges surface water to a 1500mm x 1000mm culvert along the southwest boundary of the site. This ultimately outfalls into the Barnakyle river via a lagoon west of the M20 on/off ramp.

2.0 Proposed Development

2.1. Permission is sought for the construction of an industrial unit which will include two warehouse units as well as ancillary spaces to accommodate offices and staff welfare facilities. The gross floor area of the proposed building measures 5,200sqm. The proposed building is designed to a height of 9.6 metres and will be externally finished in selected flat panel architectural cladding (with colour to be confirmed). Signage is proposed on the southwest and southeast elevations and roof mounted solar PV arrays are proposed. The perimeter of the site will be defined by a new 2.4 metre high palisade security fence and new tree planting is proposed along the entire western boundary of the site.

2.2. The development represents an extension of the existing facility to the southeast of the site which is operated by Takumi Precision Engineering. It is stated that it is expert in bespoke medical, aerospace and industrial component assembly and

manufacturing. It is envisaged that the operator's medical device business will transfer to the proposed building whilst the aerospace business will remain in the existing facility.

2.3. It is proposed to raise the levels of the site to between 10.4 metres AOD and 9.9 metres AOD in order to provide a freeboard for the proposed finished floor level (FFL) of the building and associated access/car parking areas. A 750m³ compensation storage area for flood waters is proposed within the western part of the site under the proposed carparking area.

2.4. Surface water is proposed to be discharged at greenfield rates to the existing surface water network along the southwest boundary of the site (1500mm x 1000mm culvert) via sustainable drainage system (SuDS) measures. Additionally, sections of the existing surface water network within the confines of the site will be diverted/upgraded to accommodate the footprint of the proposed building. Foul water is to be treated to an existing pumping station to the south of the site via primarily new proposed foul sewers. Many of the existing sewers are to be abandoned in order to accommodate the footprint of the building. The application has been accompanied by a number of documents including the following:

- Architectural Design Statement and Landscape Report with associated drawings
- Natura Impact Statement (NIS) and associated Appropriate Assessment Screening Report
- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report
- Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) Report
- Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment (SSFRA)
- Engineering Planning Report, Stage 1 Stormwater Audit and CCTV surveys of existing surface and foul networks
- Traffic and Transportation Assessment, Stage 1 Quality Audit including Road Safety Audit and Workplace Travel Plan
- Outline Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and pre-construction Resource and Waste Management Plan (RWMP)

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

The planning authority (PA) decided to grant permission by Order dated 14th October 2025 subject to 12 no. conditions.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

Planning Report

The planning report on file assessed the proposed development in terms of the principle, access and parking, flood risk, archaeology and ecology. The first report recommended further information in the form of an ecological impact assessment report and the inclusion of a 10-metre strip of land next to the watercourse to allow for maintenance access to the OPW. After submission of the further information, a grant of permission was recommended, which was endorsed by the Senior Planner.

Other Technical Reports (*Appendix 4 of Planning Report)*

Ecologist – This report considered the findings of the NIS to be acceptable and required all mitigation measures to be implemented.

Environment and Climate Action – This section outlined no objection subject to conditions including CCTV surveys of the newly constructed storm network and installation of flow monitoring devices.

Fire and Building Control – This section outlined no objection to the development.

Roads Department – This section outlined no objection subject to conditions.

County Archaeologist – This section outlined no objection subject to conditions.

Active Travel – This section outlined no objection to the development.

Conditions

Condition No. 6 required the submission of a stage 2 and stage 3 road safety audit.

Condition Nos. 8(f) & (g) required the submission of a stage 2 detailed design stage storm water audit and a stage 3 completion storm water audit.

Condition No. 11 required the submission of design details in relation to signage.

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

Office of Public Works (OPW) – It noted that the site partially bounds the southern side of Channel C1/10/85 Maigue Scheme, for which maintenance responsibility lies with the OPW. It requested that a 10 metre wide strip of land parallel to the channel be provided as a condition of any grant of permission. It also stated that the PA should give due consideration to flood risk at the site. It confirmed satisfaction to the applicant regarding the revised proposals submitted at further information stage.

Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage – Development Applications Unit (DAU) – It recommended that alteration or removal of hedgerow/vegetation on site should be undertaken outside of the bird nesting season and that standard best practice construction measures should be adhered to during the construction phase.

Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) – It requested that the PA have regard to the national guidelines in relation to development effecting national roads.

Uisce Éireann (UÉ) – It outlined no objection to the development subject to conditions.

3.4. Third Party Observations

A single third-party observation was lodged by Mr. Tom Ryan who objected to the development on a number of matters including pollution of the Loughmore Canal which is polluting the Barnakyle stream and Barnakyle River, flood risk and misconnections in the foul and storm water network. An expert report from Tetra Tech was provided as part of the submission confirming evidence of pollution of Loughmore Canal.

4.0 Relevant Planning History

There is an extensive planning history associated with Raheen Business Park.

PA ref. 24220 / ACP ref. 320261

Permission was granted by the Commission to Regeneron Ireland DAC for the erection of palisade fencing and access point following a third-party appeal (*Decision date 19/11/25*).

PA ref. 24/60921 / ACP ref. 322560

Permission was granted for the construction of a storage and distribution warehouse building with all associated site works following a third-party appeal. A NIS was submitted with this application (*Decision date 19/09/25*).

PA ref. 25/60174 / ACP ref. 322557

Permission was granted to replace a section of cladding with glazing on a building at Cloughkeating Avenue within Raheen Business Park. A third-party appeal was dismissed by the Commission under Section 138(1)(b)(i) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, as the matters raised did not relate to the proposed development.

PA ref. 24/384 / ACP ref. 321828

Permission was granted by the Commission to Adhesives Research Ireland for a change of use from office space to production following a third-party appeal (*Decision date 12/06/25*).

PA ref. 319334 / ACP ref. 319334

Permission was granted by the Commission to Cadmin Limited for the construction of an ESB substation following a third party appeal (*Decision date 19/02/25).*

PA ref. 23/60609 / ACP ref. 318396

Permission was granted by the Commission to Analog Devices International Unlimited Company for the regeneration of a building following a third party appeal. A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) was submitted with this application. (*Decision date 19/02/25*)

PA ref. 22/991 / ACP ref. 316282

Permission was granted by the Commission to Multi Packaging Solutions Limerick Limited for the construction of a two-storey extension to the rear of an existing building and refurbishment of existing building following a third party appeal. (*Decision date 27/01/25*)

PA ref. 22/279 / ACP ref. 314996

Permission was refused by the Commission to Polkee Limited for the construction of a two storey office building following a third party appeal. The Commission considered that insufficient information regarding the surface water drainage system was

submitted as to whether the proposed drainage system would not give rise to a heightened risk of additional flooding on lands including downstream of Loughmore Canal. (*Decision date 02/02/24*)

PA ref. 22/803 / ACP ref. 314692

Permission was granted by the Commission to Analog Devices International for an extension to a C1 R&D pilot line building following a third party appeal. A Natura Impact Statement was submitted with this application. (*Decision date 12/09/23*)

PA ref. 22803 / ACP ref. 314921

This application related to a 10-year permission to Eli Lilly for the construction of a biopharmaceutical manufacturing campus. The third-party appeals were withdrawn on 23/11/2022.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028

The subject site is zoned 'High Tech/Manufacturing Campus' where the objective is to provide for office, research and development, high technology, regional distribution/logistics, manufacturing and processing type employment in a high quality built and landscaped campus style environment.

Section 5.8 Enterprise and Employment

Raheen Business Park is identified as a Strategic Employment Location under the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP). This strategic location has the capacity to cater for investment that require greenfield or brownfield sites, access to an international airport and third level graduates.

Objective ECON O17 (Strategic Employment Locations)

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Promote, facilitate and enable a diverse range of employment opportunities by facilitating appropriate development, improvement and expansion of enterprise and industry on appropriately zoned lands, accessible by public and sustainable modes of transport, subject to compliance with all relevant Development Management

Standards and Section 28 Guidance at Strategic Employment Locations and other appropriately zoned locations in a sustainable manner.

b) Facilitate and support Raheen Business Park as a Strategic Employment Location, identified in accordance with the Limerick Shannon MASP.

Objective IN O12 (Surface Water and SuDS)

It is an objective of the Council to:

c) Maintain, improve and enhance the environmental and ecological quality of surface waters and groundwater, including reducing the discharges of pollutants or contaminants to waters, in accordance with the National River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021 (DHPLG) and the associated Programme of Measures and any subsequent River Basin Management Plan.

f) Address the issue of disposal of surface water generated by existing development in the area, through improvements to surface water infrastructure, including for example attenuation ponds, the application of sustainable urban drainage techniques, or by minimising the amount of hard surfaced areas, or providing porous surfaces as the opportunity arises.

h) Require all planning applications to include surface-water design calculations to establish the suitability of drainage between the site and the outfall point and require all new developments to include SuDS, to control surface water outfall and protect water quality in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 11: Development Management Standards of the Plan.

i) Require SuDS schemes to be designed to incorporate the four pillars of water quality, water quantity, biodiversity and amenity to the greatest extent possible within the constraints of a given site.

l) Promote the provision of suitable blue and green infrastructure and Nature Based Solutions to the surface water disposal in new development, as a means to provide urban flood resilience. This approach capitalises on the potential of urban green spaces and natural water flows, subject to the other planning considerations such as amenity, maintenance, traffic safety, proper planning and sustainable development and environmental requirements.

Objective CAF O9 (Achieving Climate Resilience)

It is an objective of the Council to promote climate resilience in development and economic activities that are regulated by planning. It is important to ensure that any developments are climate resilient as they will need to function in a climate altered environment. This means that they will be able to withstand increased intensity of storm events and rainfall and through adequate design, location and drainage elements, would not contribute to problems elsewhere, such as increased run off.

Objective CAF O11 (Nature Based Solutions)

It is an objective of the Council to promote integration and delivery of nature-based solutions and infrastructure in new developments, including surface water management, public realm and community projects as a means of managing flood risk and enhancing the natural environment.

Policy CAF P5 (Managing Flood Risk)

It is a policy of the Council to protect Flood Zone A and Flood Zone B from inappropriate development and direct developments/land uses into the appropriate lands, in accordance with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2009 (or any subsequent document) and the guidance contained in Development Management Standards and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). Where a development/land use is proposed that is inappropriate within the Flood Zone, but that has passed the Plan Making Justification Test, then the development proposal will need to be accompanied by a Development Management Justification Test and Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment in accordance with the criteria set out under The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2009 and Circular PL2/2014 (and any subsequent updates). This will need to demonstrate inclusion of measures to mitigate flood and climate change risk, including those recommended under Part 3 (Specific Flood Risk Assessment) of the Site-Specific Plan Making Justification Tests detailed in the SFRA. In Flood Zone C, the developer should satisfy themselves that the probability of flooding is appropriate to the development being proposed and should consider other sources of flooding, residual risks and the implications of climate change.

Objective CAF O21 (Identified Flood Risk)

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Ensure that no development shall commence on the lands identified as being at flood risk adjacent to the Raheen Business Park in the townlands of Ballycummin/ Rootiagh, zoned for High Tech/ Manufacturing, until a Site-specific Flood Risk Assessment, including hydraulic model has been prepared for the lands, which demonstrates that the flood risk for the lands can be mitigated or that a less vulnerable use can be accommodated on site.

Chapter 11 – Development Management Standards

- Section 11.3.11 SuDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems)

5.2. National Policy

- Project Ireland 2040 – National Planning Framework (revised 2025) and National Development Plan 2021-2030

  National Policy Objective 77

  Enhance water quality and resource management by

  - Ensuring that River Basin Management Plan objectives are fully considered through the physical planning process
  - Integrating sustainable water management solutions, such as Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDS), non-porous surfacing and green roofs, and nature based solutions, to create safe places.

  National Policy Objective 79

  Support the management of stormwater, rainwater and surface water flood and pollution risk through the use of nature-based solutions and sustainable drainage systems, including the retrofitting of existing environments to support nature based solutions.

  National Policy Objective 80

  Support the retrofitting of existing environments to cater for surface water run-off through the use of nature based solutions.

- Climate Action Plan (CAP) 2025 / CAP 2024

  Climate Action Plan 2025 builds upon last year's Plan by refining and updating the measures and actions required to deliver the carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings and it should be read in conjunction with Climate Action Plan 2024.

- Water Action Plan 2024, A River Basin Management Plan for Ireland

  The Plan responds to the requirements of the Water Framework Directive, to accelerate the identification and implementation of the right measures in the right places to both restore and protect all water bodies. The catchments.ie website provides substantial background information for this plan and the most current and up-to-date information on the status of local rivers, lakes and water bodies.

- Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP) 2023-2030

  The NBAP includes five strategic objectives aimed at addressing existing challenges and new and emerging issues associated with biodiversity loss. Section 59B(1) of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000 (as amended) requires the Board, as a public body, to have regard to the objectives and targets of the NBAP in the performance of its functions, to the extent that they may affect or relate to the functions of the Board. The impact of development on biodiversity, including species and habitats, can be assessed at a European, National and Local level and is taken into account in our decision-making having regard to the Habitats and Birds Directives, Environmental Impact Assessment Directive, Water Framework Directive and Marine Strategy Framework Directive, and other relevant legislation, strategy and policy where applicable.

5.3. Regional Policy

- Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region

Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP)

Policy Objective 13 (Strategic Employment Locations)

a. It is an objective to support the sustainable development of identified and future Strategic Employment Locations and to ensure the delivery of associated

infrastructural requirements subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process. (Raheen is identified as such location within Table 3).

5.4. National Guidelines

- Nature Based Management of Urban Rainwater and Urban Surface Water Discharges, A National Strategy (2024)
- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland, Guidance for Planning Authorities (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2009)
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, 2018)
- The Planning System and Flood Risk Management, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009)

5.5. Other Guidance

- The SuDS Manual, CIRIA (2015)

5.6. Natural Heritage Designations

The site is not located within any designated site. The nearest designated site is the Loughmore Common Turlough proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) which is located approximately 1km northwest of the subject site. The closest point of the Lower River Shannon Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (Site Code 002165) is approximately 3.4km north of the site. The closest point of the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries Special Protection Area (SPA) (Site Code 004077) is approximately 3.6km north of the site.

5.7. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening

It has been concluded that there is potential for significant effects on European sites and an Appropriate Assessment has been undertaken having regard to the documentation on file including the NIS. The screening carried out for environmental

impact assessment (Appendix 1), has addressed the characteristics of the proposed development, its location and the types and characteristics of potential impacts and has also had regard to the mitigation measures proposed in respect of protecting water quality. On this basis I am satisfied that there is no potential for significant effects on water quality or any other environmental factor, or any requirement, therefore, for environmental impact assessment. Impacts on European sites can be addressed under Appropriate Assessment, which I have addressed within Appendix 2 of this report.

6.0 The Appeal

6.1. Grounds of Appeal

A third-party appeal from Tom Ryan was lodged to the Commission on 7th November 2025. The grounds of appeal are summarised as follows:

- The Loughmore Canal and Barnakyle stream enters the Barnakyle river through the appellant's lands and it is the outfall for stormwater from the northern portion of the Raheen Industrial Estate. The Barnakyle river is also the outfall for stormwater discharges from the southern end of the estate which also flows through the appellant's lands. The proposed development will discharge stormwater to the southern outfall.
- The Loughmore Canal is a polluted watercourse and in turn the Barnakyle river and stream are polluted. A report from Tetra Tech (attached as part of observation to PA) outlined a detection of hazardous substances in water, water sediment and soil samples in the Loughmore Canal and southern outfall.
- The continued expansion of the estate has led to extensive flooding of the appellant's lands which has been accepted by An Coimisiún Pleanála. The manmade lagoon which is the southern outfall has not been considered in the flood risk assessments by the OPW and discharges to this outfall will result in high volume events on the appellant's grazing platforms.
- The existing main foul and storm water lines are in operation since the base build of the industrial estate and expansions, and multiple connections have resulted in misconnections to the foul and storm network. This has been

acknowledged by the Council and there is an ongoing investigation of same including discharges to the southern outfall. It is proven by discharges in the storm water outfall and by a CCTV survey showing discharges which are not storm water.

- The developer previously built an extension of the existing Takumi Precision Engineering premises without planning permission or any environmental assessments in an ecologically and geologically sensitive site. Enforcement proceedings were initiated by the Council, and it is questioned what harm has been done to water quality by these works and what remediation measures will be undertaken.
- The submitted EIA screening report and Ecological report are desktop studies. All watercourses that are connected to assigned waterbodies must be assessed under the Water Framework Directive. The tetra tech report has recorded the outfall as a polluted watercourse.
- The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage provided a submission as part of application ref. 24/60921 on the adjoining site requiring a full survey of meadow barley and opposite-leaved pondweed as it was unable to comment as the developer removed all of the vegetation and was using it as a carpark which has free draining to groundwater. The PA has an enforcement investigation of groundwater on the adjacent site.
- The submitted NIS does not assess the geology of the site and karst features present. The developer has a pattern of undertaking unauthorised works and there are two enforcement proceedings underway. There is no way of quantifying the effect on the SAC. The industrial estate does not have the infrastructure to support the current level of development.

6.2. Applicant Response

The applicant did not issue a response to the grounds of appeal.

6.3. Planning Authority Response

The PA issued a response to the grounds of appeal outlining that it had no further comment to make outside that of the assessment in the planner's report.

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 and national policies and guidance, I consider that the substantive issues in this appeal to be considered are as follows:

- Principle of the Development
- Surface Water Management
- Flood Risk
- Biodiversity

Principle of the Development

7.2. The subject site is located within Raheen Business Park on lands zoned 'High Tech/Manufacturing Campus' within the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 (LDP). The objective of this zoning is to provide for office, research and development, high technology, regional distribution/logistics, manufacturing and processing type employment in a high quality built and landscaped campus style environment.

7.3. The business park is also designated as a strategic employment location (SEL) under the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) where Policy Objective 13 of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (RSES) seeks to support the sustainable development of such SEL locations. This is reflected in Objective ECON O17 of the LDP (Strategic Employment Locations) which seeks to facilitate and support Raheen Business Park and a diverse range of employment opportunities. Having regard to the nature of the proposed manufacturing and assembly type development, to the location and zoning of the site, I consider the proposed development acceptable in principle.

Surface Water Management

7.4. The Commission should note that the appellant's primary concern relates to pollution of the Loughmore Canal approximately 1km north of the site from an existing surface water outfall as well as pollution of the Barnakyle river which adjoins the boundary of the site. It is contended that there are misconnections between the surface and foul

water networks within the Business Park. I acknowledge the Tetra Tech report which accompanied the appellant's observation to the PA which confirms pollution of the canal.

7.5. Notwithstanding this, the Commission should note that in this case the proposed development seeks to discharge surface water to the surface water network along the southwest boundary of the site. This comprises of an existing 1500mm x 1000mm culvert which flows northwest connecting with a 2300mm x 1000mm culvert which flows westwards under the M20 on/off ramp before discharging into a lagoon. This lagoon discharges into the Barnakyle River to the west of the site. Therefore, the Commission should note that there is no proposed surface water discharge to Loughmore Canal.

7.6. I note that the site is underlain by an existing piped surface water system which enters the site at the northern boundary and traverses the northern part of the site where it discharges surface water to the existing culvert along the southwest boundary. I note that the application was accompanied by CCTV surveys of this existing piped network which recorded some defects as well as a broken pipe but did not record any misconnections. The proposals include the abandonment of this existing surface water system traversing the site and replacement with a new diverted pipe which will similarly discharge surface water entering from the northern boundary to the existing culvert along the southwest boundary.

7.7. In addition to this, the proposals seek to install a new piped surface water network around the confines of the site which will connect into the new diverted pipe. The Commission should note that infiltration testing was carried out on site on 25th March 2025 which observed that the site was not suitable for infiltration of surface water to ground with some groundwater ingress (*Appendix G of submitted Engineering Planning Report*). Notwithstanding this, the development will incorporate tanked sustainable drainage system (SuDS) measures in the form of permeable surfaces (with temporary storage underneath), lined filter drains around the perimeter of the site and the proposed building, as well as attenuation storage. The drainage network and attenuation has been sized to cater for a 1:100 storm event with a 30% allowance for climate change and 10% for urban creep which I note is in accordance with the requirements set out in Section 11.3.11 (Sustainable Drainage Systems) of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028. Surface water will then be discharged to the

diverted pipe/existing culvert via a hydrobrake at a greenfield controlled rate of 7.4 litres per second and via a petrol interceptor. I note that the Environment and Climate Action section of the PA had no objection to the proposed surface water design.

7.8. Having regard to the existing piped surface water arrangements within the industrial estate and site, to the proposed upgrade works to the existing system and to the application of SuDS features within the proposed development, including attenuation storage with controlled outfall at greenfield rates, I am satisfied that the surface water management proposals will support the management of flood risk whilst maintaining the quality of runoff to prevent pollution downstream. Accordingly, I consider the proposals in accordance with Objectives IN O12 (Surface Water and SuDS), CAF O9 (Achieving Climate Resilience), CAF O11 (Nature Based Solutions) as well as the requirements of Section 11.3.11 (Sustainable Drainage Systems) of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028. If the Commission is minded to grant permission, I recommend that a condition is attached that requires stage 2 and stage 3 storm water audits to be carried out to ensure that the system is constructed and operates as designed.

Flood Risk

7.9. The Commission should note that parts of the site are located within fluvial flood zones A and B as per the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment Management (CFRAM) Mid-Range Future Scenario (MRFS) maps. Accordingly, the application has been accompanied by a site-specific flood risk assessment (SSFRA) which I note is in accordance with Policy CAF P5 (Managing Flood Risk) of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028. I note that the appellant has raised concerns regarding downstream flooding of his lands.

7.10. I note that the SSFRA included for the MRFA, classed the development as a less vulnerable development and applied a justification test in accordance with the 2009 Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities. The Commission should note that the proposed finished floor level of the building will be 10.50mAOD, which will provide a freeboard of 1.38 metres above the 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) for the MRFS. The proposed access road and car parking areas will have a minimum level of 9.90mAOD, which is 0.78 metres above the 1% AEP MRFS. In addition to this, due to the raising of the lands it is proposed to

provide flood water compensation storage within the site, calculated at 750m³. This is in addition to the SuDS attenuation storage. The Commission should note that the justification test concludes that the proposed development complies with the requirements of Table 5.1 of the 2009 Planning System Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities.

7.11. Having regard to the results of the SSFRA, including the application and conclusions of the justification test and to the compensatory and mitigation measures proposed, together with my assessment within paragraphs 7.4 to 7.8 above, I am satisfied that the proposed development will not be vulnerable to flood risk nor will the proposed development increase the risk of flooding elsewhere (including the appellant's lands). Accordingly, I consider that the proposed development complies with Objectives CAF O9 (Achieving Climate Resilience), CAF O11 (Nature Based Solutions) and CAF O21(a) (Identified Flood Risk) of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028.

Biodiversity

7.12. I note that the appellant contends that the submitted ecological impact assessment (EcIA) report was a desktop study. However, the Commission should note that the assessment included a site specific habitat and flora survey which was undertaken on 23rd July 2025. A bat survey was also undertaken by the consultant ecologist on 15th July 2025. This included the placement of a static within the treeline to the north of the site which recorded from 15th July 2025 to 23rd July 2025 during the active bat season. The static survey recorded common pipistrelle as the most represented species and it did not record any lesser horseshoe bat. The level of bat activity was considered to be low to moderate overall. It was concluded that the site was not considered a suitable habitat for bat species due to the M20 motorway and lighting in proximity to the site.

7.13. I note that the EcIA outlines that best practice measures will be incorporated into the design of the project including removal of vegetation outside of the bird nesting season, the removal of trees outside of the active bat period and maternity season and the implementation of suitable bat lighting. In addition, I note that the applicant proposes landscaping measures within the site (as illustrated within the submitted landscape report and on drawing no. 25166-1-100), such as the introduction of native tree planting throughout the western boundary, linear tree planting along the access route and low ornamental hedging within the site. Overall, I am satisfied that the

proposed development will not result in an adverse impact on the biodiversity of the area.

Other Issues – Enforcement

7.14. The Commission should note that the appellant has raised concerns with prior unauthorised developments and enforcement investigations. The Commission should note that the matter of enforcement falls under the jurisdiction of the PA.

8.0 Appropriate Assessment

8.1. In screening the need for Appropriate Assessment, it was determined that during the construction and operational phases the proposed development could result in significant effects on the Lower River Shannon Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (Site Code 002165) and River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries Special Protection Area (SPA) (Site Code 004077), in view of the conservation objectives of those sites and that Appropriate Assessment under the provisions of S177U was required.

8.2. Following an examination, analysis and evaluation of the NIS and all associated material submitted I consider that adverse effects on site integrity of the Lower River Shannon SAC and River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries 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. My determination is based on the following:

- Detailed assessment of construction impacts.
- Effectiveness of mitigation measures proposed including the installation of a silt fence around the perimeter of the site to protect adjoining watercourses, importation of infill material free from invasive species, refuelling of plant and concrete pours in contained areas away from watercourses and storage of fuels and oils in sealed tanks.
- Application of planning conditions to ensure application of these measures.

8.3. The proposed development will not affect the attainment of conservation objectives for the Lower River Shannon SAC or the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA.

9.0 Water Framework Directive (WFD) Screening

9.1. The subject site is located within the southwest part of Raheen Business Park and it adjoins the Barnakyle River (ref. Barnakyle_020). This river waterbody (Code: IE_SH_24B050600) is classed as moderate ecological status and 'at risk' of not achieving its WFD objective as per the 2019-2024 monitoring period.[1] The site is underlain by the Limerick City Southwest ground waterbody (Code: IE_SH_G_141) which is classed as good ecological status but 'at risk' of not achieving its WFD objective as per the 2019-2024 monitoring period.[2] Water deterioration concerns within the site have been raised in the planning appeal as well as historical water issues regarding the wider business park. I note that the Geological Survey Ireland (GIS) mapping tool[3] does not identify any karst features within the site.

9.2. I have assessed the project and have considered the objectives set out in Article 4 of the Water Framework Directive which seek to protect and, where necessary, restore surface and groundwater waterbodies in order to reach good status (meaning both good chemical and good ecological status), and to prevent deterioration. Having considered the nature, scale and location of the project, I am satisfied that it can be eliminated from further assessment because there is no conceivable risk to any surface and/or groundwater waterbodies, either qualitatively or quantitatively. The reason for this conclusion is as follows:

- To the treatment of surface water to the existing surface water network via SuDS measures.
- To the measures proposed within the submitted NIS, outline construction management plan and EcIA which are designed to protect surface water and groundwater from pollution during the construction phase.
- To the design of the proposed development above the 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) for the mid-range future scenario and associated 750m³ flood water compensation storage proposed to offset the risk of displacing floodwaters.

[1] https://www.catchments.ie/data/#/waterbody/IE_SH_24B050600?_k=fjsfd7
[2] https://www.catchments.ie/data/#/waterbody/IE_SH_G_141?_k=feazep
[3] https://dcenr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=a30af518e87a4c0ab2fbde2aaac3c228 (*All accessed 26/02/26*)

- To the nature of the proposed development.

9.3. I conclude that on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development will not result in a risk of deterioration on any waterbody (rivers, lakes, groundwater, transitional and coastal), either qualitatively or quantitatively, or on a temporary or permanent basis, or otherwise jeopardise any waterbody in reaching its WFD objectives and, consequently, can be excluded from further assessment.

10.0 Recommendation

It is my recommendation to the Commission that permission should be **Granted**, subject to conditions, for the reasons and considerations set out below.

11.0 Reasons and Considerations

Having regard to the location of the proposed development within Raheen Business Park, which is identified as a Strategic Employment Location under the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) within the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region, to its location on lands zoned 'High Tech/Manufacturing Campus' within the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028, where the objective is to provide for, inter alia, manufacturing and processing type employment, to the design and layout of the proposed development, to the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) features onsite prior to discharge (at greenfield rates) to the existing drainage system of the Business Park, it is considered that, subject to compliance with the conditions set out below, the proposed development would facilitate and support Raheen Business Park as a strategic employment location in accordance with Objective ECON O17 (Strategic Employment Locations) of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 and Policy Objective 13 (Strategic Employment Locations) of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan, would be acceptable in terms of public health and would not increase the risk of flooding. Accordingly, the proposed development would be in accordance with Objectives IN O12 (Surface Water and SuDS), CAF O9 (Achieving Climate Resilience), CAF O11 (Nature Based Solutions), CAF O21(a) (Identified Flood Risk) as well as the requirements of Section 11.3.11 (SuDS) of the Limerick Development

Plan 2022-2028, and would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

The Commission performed its functions in relation to the making of its decision, in a manner consistent with Section 15(1) of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Act 2015, as amended by Section 17 of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, (consistent with Climate Action Plan 2024 and Climate Action Plan 2025 and the national long term climate action strategy, national adaptation framework and approved sectoral adaptation plans set out in those Plans and in furtherance of the objective of mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the effects of climate change in the State).

12.0 **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 20th 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 (NIS), shall be implemented. **Reason:** To protect the integrity of European sites.
3.	The compensatory flood storage and flood mitigation measures contained in the submitted Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment, shall be implemented. **Reason:** In the interest of public health.

4.	(a) The measures contained in the submitted Ecological Impact Assessment report, shall be implemented. (b) The landscaping scheme lodged with the application shall be carried out within the first planting season following substantial completion of external construction works. 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 biodiversity and visual amenity.
5.	(a) Drainage arrangements including the attenuation and disposal of surface water and compensatory flood storage, shall comply with the requirements of the planning authority for such works and services. (b) In the event of fire any contaminated liquid must not be discharged to the storm water drainage network. (c) Prior to the commencement of development, the developer shall submit to the planning authority for written agreement a stage two – Detailed Design Stage Storm Water Audit. Upon completion of the development a stage 3 – Completion Stormwater Audit to demonstrate Sustainable Drainage System measures have been installed, and are working as designed and that there has been no misconnections or damage to storm water drainage infrastructure during construction, shall be submitted to the planning authority for written agreement. **Reason:** In the interest of public health and surface water management.
6.	Prior to the commencement of development, the developer shall enter into a connection agreement with Uisce Eireann to provide for a service connection to the public water supply and/or wastewater collection network. **Reason:** In the interest of public health and to ensure adequate water/wastewater facilities.

7.	(a) Prior to commencement of development, a stage 2 road safety audit shall be submitted to the planning authority for its written approval which shall be in compliance with Transport Infrastructure Ireland's publication 'Road Safety Audit GE-STY-01024' (2017). (b) Prior to occupation of the development, a stage 3 road safety audit shall be submitted to the planning authority for its written approval which shall be in compliance with Transport Infrastructure Ireland's publication 'Road Safety Audit GE-STY-01024' (2017). **Reason:** In the interest of amenity and of traffic and pedestrian safety.
8.	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
9.	A Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the planning authority prior to the commencement of development. The CEMP shall include but not be limited to construction phase controls for dust, noise and vibration, waste management, protection of soils, groundwaters, and surface waters, site housekeeping, emergency response planning, site environmental policy, and project roles and responsibilities. **Reason:** In the interest of environmental protection.
10.	Prior to the commencement of development, the developer or any agent acting on its behalf, shall prepare a Resource Waste Management Plan (RWMP) as set out in the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Best Practice Guidelines for the Preparation of Resource and Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects (2021) including demonstration of proposals to adhere to best practice and protocols. The RWMP shall include specific proposals as to how the RWMP will be

	measured and monitored for effectiveness; these details shall be placed on the file and retained as part of the public record. The RWMP must be submitted to the planning authority for written agreement prior to the commencement of development. All records (including for waste and all resources) pursuant to the agreed RWMP shall be made available for inspection at the site office at all times. **Reason:** In the interest of proper planning and sustainable development.
11.	(a) Prior to commencement of development, external finishes of the proposed building and perimeter fencing shall be submitted to the planning authority for its written approval. (b) Prior to occupation of the development, design details of the proposed signage shall be submitted to the planning authority for its written approval **Reason:** In the interest of visual amenity.
12.	Lighting shall be provided in accordance with the details submitted with the application. Certification that the lighting has been erected as per the approved design shall be submitted to the planning authority for its written approval prior to the occupation of the development. **Reason:** In the interest of amenity and public safety.
13.	All goods, including raw materials, manufactured goods, packaging, crates etc. shall be stored or displayed only within the enclosed building. **Reason:** In the interest of visual amenity.
14.	The developer shall pay to the planning authority a financial contribution in respect of public infrastructure and facilities benefiting development in the area of the planning authority that is provided or intended to be provided by or on behalf of the authority in accordance with the terms of the Development Contribution Scheme made under section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. The contribution shall be paid prior to commencement of development or in such phased payments as the planning authority may facilitate and shall be subject to any applicable indexation

	provisions of the Scheme at the time of payment. Details of the application of the terms of the Scheme shall be agreed between the planning authority and the developer or, in default of such agreement, the matter shall be referred to An Coimisiún Pleanála to determine the proper application of the terms of the Scheme. **Reason:** It is a requirement of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, that a condition requiring a contribution in accordance with the Development Contribution Scheme made under section 48 of the Act be applied to the permission.

Declaration

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.

Gary Farrelly
Planning Inspector
26th February 2026

Appendix 1: EIA Screening

(a) Form 1 - EIA Pre-Screening

Case Reference	PL-500244-LK-25
Development Summary	Construction of industrial unit to include two warehouse units and associated site works.
Development Address	Raheen Business Park, Limerick
	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.~~	
☒ 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.~~	
~~☐ Yes, the proposed development is of a Class and meets/exceeds the threshold.~~	

☒ Yes, the proposed development is of a Class but is sub-threshold.	Part 2: Class 10(a) Infrastructure Projects Industrial estate development projects, where the area would exceed 15 hectares. • The proposed development relates to a development within an existing industrial estate with a site area of 1.21 hectares.

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)**~~

(b) Form 3: EIA Screening Determination

A. CASE DETAILS		
An Coimisiún Pleanála Case Reference	PL-500244-LK-25	
Development Summary	Construction of industrial unit to include two warehouse units and associated site works.	
	Yes / No / NA	**Comment (if relevant)**
1. Was a Screening Determination carried out by the PA?	No	The PA considered that it was not a type of development under Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, and that a screening determination was not required.
2. Has Schedule 7A information been submitted?	Yes	The application was accompanied by an EIA screening report which included Schedule 7a information.
3. Has an AA screening report or NIS been submitted?	Yes	A NIS was submitted with the application and concluded that, subject to the implementation of mitigation measures, the proposed development would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Lower River Shannon SAC or River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA, individually or in-combination with other plans and projects.
4. Is a IED/IPC or Waste Licence (or review of licence) required from the	N/A	

EPA? If YES has the EPA commented on the need for an EIAR?			
Have any other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment which have a significant bearing on the project been carried out pursuant to other relevant Directives – for example SEA	Yes	The subject site is located on lands zoned 'High Tech/Manufacturing Campus' within the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028. The Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 has been subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA).	
B. EXAMINATION	**Yes / No / Uncertain**	**Briefly describe the nature and extent and Mitigation Measures (where relevant)** (having regard to the probability, magnitude (including population size affected), complexity, duration, frequency, intensity, and reversibility of impact) **Mitigation Measures –** Where relevant specify features or measures proposed by the applicant to avoid or prevent a significant effect	**Is this likely to result in significant effects on the environment?** **Yes / No / Uncertain**
This screening examination should be read with, and in light of, the rest of the Inspector's Report.			

1. Characteristics of proposed development (including demolition, construction, operation or decommissioning)			
1.1 Is the project significantly different in character or scale to the existing surrounding or environment?	No	The overall site measures 1.21 hectares which is not exceptional in the context of the wider c. 180 hectare business park.	No
1.2 Will construction, operation, decommissioning or demolition works cause physical changes to the locality (topography, land use, waterbodies)?	Yes	The topography of the site ranges from 7.9mAOD to 10.4mAOD. It is proposed to raise the levels of the site to 9.90mAOD-10.5mAOD to accommodate the building FFL and access road/car parking areas. There is a drainage channel throughout the site which is proposed to be made obsolete as part of the surface water design.	No
1.3 Will construction or operation of the project use natural resources such as land, soil, water, materials/minerals or energy, especially resources which are non-renewable or in short supply?	Yes	Water and fuel will be required during the construction phase of the development. This is not predicted to cause significant impacts.	No
1.4 Will the project involve the use, storage, transport, handling or	No	An outline construction and environmental management plan accompanies the	No

production of substance which would be harmful to human health or the environment?		application and a final CEMP will be prepared as a condition of grant.	
1.5 Will the project produce solid waste, release pollutants or any hazardous / toxic / noxious substances?	No	Any waste produced will be recycled or reused where possible. A pre-construction and resource waste management plan accompanies the application which outlines the waste arrangements that will be utilised during construction. No significant impact is considered likely.	No
1.6 Will the project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?	No	The submitted outline CEMP describes proposed pollution control measures during construction such as silt fencing around the perimeter of the site to protect watercourses, concrete pours within contained areas and refuelling of vehicles within the compound. No significant impact is considered likely subject to the implementation of a final CEMP.	No

1.7 Will the project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat, energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Yes	Noise will occur as a result of construction and construction related traffic, however, this will be short term in duration and not considered significant. The location is within an established business park with no significant noise sensitive locations. During operation, lighting will be designed in keeping with bat-friendly lighting guidance.	No
1.8 Will there be any risks to human health, for example due to water contamination or air pollution?	No	During operation, surface water will be treated via SuDS features and pollution control measures before discharging to the existing surface water network at greenfield rates. During construction, the outline CEMP outlines that silt fencing will be installed around the perimeter of the site to protect nearby watercourses. There is potential for dust generation during construction and standard dust control measures will be implemented as outlined in the submitted CEMP.	No

		Measures will be put in place to prevent any potential spillages to ground of fuels during construction. The CEMP outlines that contingency plans will be implemented.	
1.9 Will there be any risk of major accidents that could affect human health or the environment?	No	There is no risk of major accidents or disasters having regard to the nature of the development and location of the site.	No
1.10 Will the project affect the social environment (population, employment)	Yes	The development will create employment during the construction phase and operational phase.	No
1.11 Is the project part of a wider large scale change that could result in cumulative effects on the environment?	Yes	The project is located within an established industrial estate. Surface water will discharge to the existing network that serves the wider estate, however, no significant cumulative effects are anticipated due to the provision of SuDS features and pollution control measures. Traffic volumes are anticipated to increase slightly, however, the surrounding road network is well laid out	No

		and capable of carrying large volumes of traffic.	
2. Location of proposed development			
2.1 Is the proposed development located on, in, adjoining or have the potential to impact on any of the following: - **European site (SAC/ SPA/ pSAC/ pSPA)** - **NHA/ pNHA** - **Designated Nature Reserve** - **Designated refuge for flora or fauna** - **Place, site or feature of ecological interest, the preservation/conservation/ protection of which is an objective of a development plan/ LAP/**	Yes	The site is located approximately 1km from Loughmore Common Turlough pNHA. However, the existing stormwater system within the southwest part of the Business Park discharges into a lagoon to the west of the site and onwards into the Barnakyle river. This river is hydrologically connected to European sites further downstream. I refer the Commission to Appendix 2 of this report in this regard. No significant effects in terms of the EIA Directive are anticipated.	No

draft plan or variation of a plan			
2.2 Could any protected, important or sensitive species of flora or fauna which use areas on or around the site, for example: for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, over-wintering, or migration, be affected by the project?	No	The application is accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment Report (EcIA) which outlines best practice measures to ensure local ecology is protected from adverse impacts.	No
2.3 Are there any other features of landscape, historic, archaeological, or cultural importance that could be affected?	No	Having reviewed the National Monument Service (NMS) Historic Environment Viewer, the subject site is not located within any Sites and Monuments Records (SMR) designated zones.	No
2.4 Are there any areas on/around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources which could be affected by the project, for example: forestry, agriculture,	No	The concerns of the appellant regarding flooding and pollution of agricultural lands will not be exacerbated by the project due to the incorporation of SuDS features and compensatory measures proposed as	No

water/coastal, fisheries, minerals?		outlined in the submitted SSFRA. No significant effects are likely.	
2.5 Are there any water resources including surface waters, for example: rivers, lakes/ponds, coastal or groundwaters which could be affected by the project, particularly in terms of their volume and flood risk?	No	The site is located within Flood Zones A and B and a site specific flood risk assessment (SSFRA) was submitted which concludes that the development will not be at risk of flooding nor will the raising of the lands increase the risk of flooding elsewhere, subject to the installation of compensatory and mitigation measures. Surface water will be treated via SuDS, pollution control measures and discharged at greenfield rates. Therefore, no significant effects on the downstream surface water network are likely.	No
2.6 Is the location susceptible to subsidence, landslides or erosion?	No	No evidence of these risks having reviewed the Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) Landslide database.[4]	

[4] https://dcenr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=a30af518e87a4c0ab2fbde2aaac3c228 (*Accessed 26/02/26*)

2.7 Are there any key transport routes(eg National primary Roads) on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project?	No	The site is served by a road network that is capable of handling a large volume of traffic. Site related construction traffic would be minor in comparison to existing traffic volumes. The operation of the development will not result in significant traffic, transportation or road safety related issues.	No
2.8 Are there existing sensitive land uses or community facilities (such as hospitals, schools etc) which could be affected by the project?	No		No
3. Any other factors that should be considered which could lead to environmental impacts?			
3.1 Cumulative Effects: Could this project together with existing and/or approved development result in cumulative effects during the construction/ operation phase?	No	Cumulative effects have been considered above under Question 1.11 and are not likely to give rise to significant impacts.	No

3.2 Transboundary Effects: Is the project likely to lead to transboundary effects?	No		
3.3 Are there any other relevant considerations?	No		
C. CONCLUSION			
No real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.	**X**	EIAR Not Required	
~~**Real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.**~~		~~EIAR Required~~	
D. MAIN REASONS AND CONSIDERATIONS			
Having regard to: 1. The criteria set out in Schedule 7, in particular (a) The nature and scale of the proposed development in an established industrial estate/business park served by public infrastructure,			

(b) The inclusion of SuDS features within the proposed development, together with pollution and hydraulic control measures, which will discharge clean surface water at greenfield rates to the existing stormwater network of the Business Park and therefore will not significantly affect the water quality being discharged or increase the risk of flooding downstream,

(c) The location of the development outside of any sensitive location specified in article 109(4)(a) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended

2. The results of other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment submitted by the applicant including the Natura Impact Statement, Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment and Ecological Impact Assessment.

3. The features and measures proposed by the applicant envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant effects on the environment,

The Commission concluded that the proposed development would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment, and that an environmental impact assessment report (EIAR) is not required.

Appendix 2(a) Appropriate Assessment Screening

Screening for Appropriate Assessment Test for likely significant effects	
Step 1: Description of the project and local site characteristics	
Brief description of project	The project involves the construction of an industrial building for general manufacturing, sustainable drainage systems, bicycle and car parking and associated site works. It is proposed to increase the ground levels across the site to accommodate the finished floor level and car park/road levels. Surface water will be discharged to the existing surface water sewer that traverses the site and which will be diverted. The existing foul sewer within the site will also be diverted to the south of the building before ultimately discharging into the existing pumping station.
Brief description of development site characteristics and potential impact mechanisms	The site is located within the southwest corner of Raheen Business Park. There is an existing stream (Barnakyle Stream/River) to the south of the site which flows westwards where it eventually outfalls into the River Maigue. The Loughmore Canal is located approximately 1km northwest of the site. This canal is approximately 715 metres in length where it then flows into drainage channels within agricultural fields for approximately 2.5km before it joins the Barnakyle River. Whilst the northern part of the business park discharges surface water into the Loughmore Canal, the proposed development will discharge surface water into the stream to the south of the site. The submitted Ecological Impact Assessment (and associated site survey) identified no habitats of ecological interest within the site. The characteristics of the site comprises of mainly dry meadows and grassy verges, spoil and bare ground

	and artificial surfaces. There are a number of drainage ditches within the site which were recorded as overgrown with vegetation with stagnant water and these are proposed to be become obsolete following the proposed development and surface water management proposals.
Screening report	Yes (author Enviroplan Consulting Limited)
Natura Impact Statement (NIS)	Yes (author Enviroplan Consulting Limited)
Relevant Submissions	The Development Applications Unit (DAU) submission to the PA did not raise any AA issues. The third-party's grounds of appeal states that the NIS does not consider geology or karst features.
Step 2: Identification of relevant European sites using the Source-Pathway-Receptor model	
Two European sites are potentially within a zone of influence of the proposed development as detailed within Table 1 below. I note that the screening report considered a further three sites in a wider area (within 15km) including Tory Hill SAC, Askeaton Fen Complex SAC and Curraghchase Woods SAC but rules these out for further examination due to lack of ecological connections. I am satisfied that these sites can be excluded from further consideration.	

Table 1

European Site (Code)	Qualifying Interests (QIs)	Distance from proposed development	Ecological connections	Consider further in Screening (Y/N)
Lower River Shannon SAC (002165)	21 QIs	The closest direct point via air is 3.4km to the north. The existing stormwater network within this area of the Business Park discharges to the south via the Barnakyle river which flows for approximately 8.15km before it meets the SAC designation.	During the construction phase there will be a hydrological connection between the existing drainage ditches onsite/stream to the south and the Barnakyle River. During the operational phase, there will be a hydrological connection via the proposed stormwater network, existing stormwater network within Raheen	Y
River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA (004077)	21 QI bird species Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	The closest direct point via air is 3.6km to the north. Hydrological connection to the south approximately 8.72km upstream of SPA designation.		Y

			Business Park and the Barnakyle River.	

During the operational phase, the proposed development will release clean surface water at greenfield rates to the existing storm water network via SuDS measures including filter drains, attenuation areas and a petrol interceptor. Having regard to the nature of the discharge and to the significant distance downstream to the European sites, it is considered that there is no significant effects likely on the European sites during the operational phase. I consider the SuDS features as measures integral to the development and which are not intended to avoid or reduce effects on European sites.

Step 3: Describe the likely significant effects of the project (if any, alone or in combination) on European sites

Site Name **Qualifying Interests**	**Possibility of significant effects (alone) in view of the conservation objectives of the site**	
	Impacts	**Effects**
Site 1: Lower River Shannon SAC (002165) • Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time [1110] • Estuaries [1130] • Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] • Coastal lagoons [1150] • Large shallow inlets and bays [1160]	<u>Direct – No impact</u> There is no potential effect in terms of loss, fragmentation or disturbance of habitat, or reduction in species density, due to the characteristics of the site and the distance to the SAC and SPA.	Deterioration in water quality during the construction phase and operational phase which could undermine the conservation objectives set for water quality targets and to water dependent species.

• Reefs [1170] • Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] • Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] • Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] • Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae) [1330] • Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia maritimi) [1410] • Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitricho-Batrachion vegetation [3260] • Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae) [6410] • Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0] • Margaritifera margaritifera (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029] • Petromyzon marinus (Sea Lamprey) [1095] • Lampetra planeri (Brook Lamprey) [1096] • Lampetra fluviatilis (River Lamprey) [1099] • Salmo salar (Salmon) [1106] • Tursiops truncatus (Common Bottlenose Dolphin) [1349]	<u>Indirect – Potential impact</u> There is potential for release of silt and sediment and construction related compounds including hydrocarbons in surface water runoff during site works. During operation, as the site is located within Flood Zones A and B, there is potential for natural floodwaters to release hydrocarbons into the watercourses.	

• Lutra lutra (Otter) [1355]		
Site 2: River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA (004077) Cormorant (Phalacrocorax carbo) [A017] Whooper Swan (Cygnus cygnus) [A038] Light-bellied Brent Goose (Branta bernicla hrota) [A046] Shelduck (Tadorna tadorna) [A048] Teal (Anas crecca) [A052] Pintail (Anas acuta) [A054] Scaup (Aythya marila) [A062] Ringed Plover (Charadrius hiaticula) [A137] Golden Plover (Pluvialis apricaria) [A140] Grey Plover (Pluvialis squatarola) [A141] Lapwing (Vanellus vanellus) [A142] Knot (Calidris canutus) [A143] Dunlin (Calidris alpina) [A149] Black-tailed Godwit (Limosa limosa) [A156] Bar-tailed Godwit (Limosa lapponica) [A157] Curlew (Numenius arquata) [A160] Redshank (Tringa totanus) [A162] Greenshank (Tringa nebularia) [A164]		

Black-headed Gull (Chroicocephalus ridibundus) [A179] Wigeon (Mareca penelope) [A855] Shoveler (Spatula clypeata) [A857] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]		
	Likelihood of significant effects from proposed development (alone) **YES**	
	~~If No, is there a likelihood of significant effects occurring in combination with other plans or projects?~~	

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

Based on the information provided in the screening report, site visit, review of the conservation objectives and supporting documents, I consider that in the absence of mitigation measures beyond best practice construction methods, the proposed development has the potential to result in significant effects on the Lower River Shannon SAC and River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA during the construction and operational phases.

I concur with the applicants' findings that such impacts could be significant in terms of the stated conservation objectives of the SAC and SPA when considered on their own and in combination with other projects and plans in relation to pollution related pressures on qualifying interest habitats and species.

Appendix 2(b) Appropriate Assessment

Appropriate Assessment
The requirements of Article 6(3) as related to appropriate assessment of a project under Part XAB, Section 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 project in view of the relevant conservation objectives of the Lower River Shannon SAC and River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA based on scientific information provided by the applicant. The information relied upon includes the following: • Natura Impact Statement (NIS) prepared by Enviroplan Consulting Limited • National Parks and Wildlife Service Conservation Objectives Supporting Documents for the SAC and SPA and related publications. • Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland, Guidance for Planning Authorities (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2009). • Managing Natura 2000 sites, The provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC (European Commission, 2019). 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

The third party appellant noted that the NIS does not consider geology or karst features. The Development Applications Unit submission to the PA did not raise any AA issues.

Lower River Shannon SAC (002165)

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

- Water quality deterioration (construction and operational phases)

Qualifying Interest features likely to be affected	Conservation Objectives (Targets and Attributes)	Potential adverse effects	Mitigation Measures (summary)
Margaritifera margaritifera (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029]	To restore the favourable conservation condition defined by, inter alia, maintaining the distribution within the Cloon River, Co. Clare, the restoration of the population size to 10,000 adult mussels and restore the water quality to high ecological status with low nutrient concentration.	Deterioration in water quality during the construction phase has the potential to impact the conservation objectives of the QI species. Deterioration in water quality as a result of natural floodwaters inundating the site, could release hydrocarbons potentially impacting the conservation objectives of the QI species.	• Erection of silt fence around perimeter of the site. • Siting of construction compound outside Flood Zones A and B. • Importation of infill material free from invasive species. • Construction methodology in accordance with best practice measures and Inland Fisheries Ireland guidelines. • Designated contained areas for concrete pours / plant refuelling away from watercourses. • Spill kits available onsite • All fuels and oils stored onsite will be stored within sealed tanks (mitigation measure as outlined in submitted SSFRA).

Petromyzon marinus (Sea Lamprey) [1095]	To restore the favourable conservation condition which is defined by, inter alia, no decline in extent or distribution of spawning beds.	Same as above	Same as above
Lampetra planeri (Brook Lamprey) [1096]	To maintain the favourable conservation condition which is defined by, inter alia, no decline in extent or distribution of spawning beds.		Same as above
Lampetra fluviatilis (River Lamprey) [1099]	To maintain the favourable conservation condition which is defined by, inter alia, no decline in extent or distribution of spawning beds.	Same as above	Same as above
Salmo salar (Salmon) [1106]	To restore the favourable conservation condition which is defined by, inter alia, no decline in extent or distribution of spawning redds due to anthropogenic causes and water quality targets of at least 4 (Q value) at all sites sampled by the EPA.	Same as above	Same as above
Tursiops truncatus (Common Bottlenose Dolphin) [1349]	To maintain the favourable conservation condition which is defined by, inter alia, human activities occurring at levels that do not adversely affect the species population.	Same as above	Same as above
Lutra lutra (Otter) [1355]	To restore the favourable conservation condition which is defined by, inter alia, no significant	Same as above	Same as above

	decline in the distribution or terrestrial/river habitat.		
Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitricho-Batrachion vegetation [3260]	To maintain the favourable conservation condition which is defined by, inter alia, low concentration of nutrients and no decline in habitat distribution.	Same as above	Same as above
Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time [1110], Estuaries [1130], Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140], Coastal lagoons [1150], Large shallow inlets and bays [1160], Reefs [1170], Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220], Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230], Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310], Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae) [1330], Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia maritimi) [1410], Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae) [6410], Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0]	*Having regard to the location of these qualifying interests at a significant distance downstream and to the pressures and threats associated with these QIs as set out in the NPWS' Article 17 Habitat Conservation Assessments 2025, it is considered there will be no likely significant effects on the conservation objectives of these QIs.*		

River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA (004077) Summary of key issues that could give rise to adverse effects (from screening stage): • Water quality deterioration (construction and operational phases)			
Qualifying Interest features likely to be affected	**Conservation Objectives** **(Targets and Attributes)**	**Potential adverse effects**	**Mitigation Measures (summary)**
Cormorant (Phalacrocorax carbo) [A017], Whooper Swan (Cygnus cygnus) [A038], Light-bellied Brent Goose (Branta bernicla hrota) [A046], Shelduck (Tadorna tadorna) [A048], Teal (Anas crecca) [A052], Pintail (Anas acuta) [A054], Scaup (Aythya marila) [A062], Ringed Plover (Charadrius hiaticula) [A137], Golden Plover (Pluvialis apricaria) [A140], Grey Plover (Pluvialis squatarola) [A141], Lapwing (Vanellus vanellus) [A142], Knot (Calidris canutus) [A143], Dunlin (Calidris alpina) [A149], Black-tailed Godwit (Limosa limosa) [A156], Bar-tailed Godwit (Limosa lapponica) [A157], Curlew (Numenius arquata) [A160], Redshank (Tringa totanus) [A162], Greenshank (Tringa	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species which is defined by, inter alia, no significant decrease in their distribution.	Deterioration in water quality during the construction phase has the potential to impact the conservation objectives of the QI species. Deterioration in water quality as a result of natural floodwaters inundating the site, could release hydrocarbons potentially impacting the conservation objectives of the QI species.	• Erection of silt fence around perimeter of the site. • Siting of construction compound outside Flood Zones A and B. • Importation of infill material free from invasive species. • Construction methodology in accordance with best practice measures and Inland Fisheries Ireland guidelines. • Designated contained areas for concrete pours / plant refuelling away from watercourses. • Spill kits available onsite • All fuels and oils stored onsite will be stored within sealed tanks (mitigation measure as outlined in submitted SSFRA)

nebularia) [A164], Black-headed Gull (Chroicocephalus ridibundus) [A179], Wigeon (Mareca penelope) [A855], Shoveler (Spatula clypeata) [A857], Wetlands [A999]			

Assessment of issues that could give rise to adverse effects:

Deterioration in water quality

During construction, there is potential for water quality deterioration through the release of suspended solids which can result in excessive eutrophication leading to deoxygenation of water and subsequent asphyxia of aquatic species. An increase in sediments has the potential to impact fish species by damaging gravel beds required for spawning, smothering fish eggs and interfering with the gills of fish. The release of hydrocarbons from construction plant and equipment, as well as during natural floodwater events during operational stage, can also affect water quality potentially resulting in toxic conditions for aquatic flora and fauna and de-oxygen of waters. The release of uncured concrete would alter the pH of the waterbody, potentially leading to aquatic flora and fauna mortality.

Mitigation Measures and conditions

The focus of mitigation measures proposed are at preventing ingress of pollutants and silt into surface water and receiving watercourses during the construction phase and operational phase (during a flood event). The measures proposed are set out in Section 6 of the submitted NIS and include:

- Erection of silt fence around perimeter of the site.
- Siting of construction compound outside Flood Zones A and B.
- Importation of infill material free from invasive species.
- Construction methodology in accordance with best practice measures and Inland Fisheries Ireland guidelines.

- Designated contained areas for concrete pours / plant refuelling away from watercourses.
- Spill kits available onsite.
- All fuels and oils stored onsite will be stored within sealed tanks (mitigation measure as outlined in submitted SSFRA).

In-combination effects

I am satisfied that in-combination effects has been assessed adequately in the NIS. The applicant has considered a number of projects within the vicinity of the site and demonstrated satisfactorily that no significant residual effects will remain post the application of mitigation measures and there is 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 the European sites. 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. Regarding indirect impacts, mitigation measures are described to prevent ingress of silt laden surface water and other construction and operational related pollutants. I am satisfied that the mitigation measures proposed to prevent such effects have been assessed as effective and can be implemented and conditioned if permission is granted.

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 Lower River Shannon SAC or River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA. Adverse effects on site integrity can be excluded and no reasonable scientific doubt remains as to the absence of such effects.

Appendix 3: Water Framework Directive (WFD) Screening

Step 1: Nature of the Project, the Site and Locality			
An Coimisiún Pleanála ref. no.	PL-500244-LK-25	**Townland, address**	Raheen Business Park, Limerick
Description of project		Construction of industrial unit to include two warehouse units and associated site works.	
Brief site description, relevant to WFD Screening,		The subject site has poor percolation characteristics as recorded within the infiltration testing carried out on 25th March 2025 (Appendix G of submitted Engineering Planning Report) with parts of the test being abandoned due to groundwater ingress. Parts of the site are also located within Flood Zones A and B and it is proposed to raise the levels of the site to provide a building finished floor level of 10.50mAOD and access road/car parking area of 9.90mAOD. The site is bounded by the Barnakyle river along the southwest boundary (ref. Barnakyle_020).	
Proposed surface water details		SuDS measures that are proposed are to be tanked with no infiltration to ground. Surface water will be discharged to an existing culvert along the southwest boundary and ultimately to the Barnakyle river via a lagoon. Discharged water will be at greenfield rates via attenuation and a petrol interceptor. In addition, a 750m³ compensatory storage area for displaced floodwaters is proposed to be provided onsite.	

Proposed water supply source & available capacity	Drinking water will be supplied via the public mains.
Proposed wastewater treatment system & available capacity, other issues	Wastewater will be discharged to the existing wastewater mains/pumping station which serves the Limerick Wastewater Treatment Plant.

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 (2019-2024)	Risk of not achieving WFD Objective	Identified pressures on that water body	Pathway linkage to water feature (e.g. surface run-off, drainage, groundwater)
River Waterbody	Adjoins the site	Barnakyle_020	Moderate	At risk	Urban Run-off Agriculture (https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/Water)	The site adjoins the waterbody and during the operational phase will be connected via the proposed new surface water system.

Groundwater waterbody	Underlying site	Limerick City Southwest IE_SH_G-141	Good	At risk	Agriculture	The site is underlain by 'Cut Peat' and has moderate subsoil permeability (Geological Survey Ireland data). It is classed as a locally important aquifer that is highly vulnerable.

Step 4: Detailed description of any component of the development or activity that may cause a risk of not achieving the WFD Objectives having regard to the S-P-R linkage.

CONSTRUCTION PHASE

No.	Component	Water body receptor (EPA Code)	Pathway (existing and new)	Potential for impact	Screening Stage Mitigation Measure*	Residual Risk (yes/no)	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	Barnakyle_020	Site adjoins waterbody, surface water system discharges to waterbody	Siltation, pH (Concrete), hydrocarbon spillages	Erection of silt fence around perimeter of the site. Siting of construction compound outside Flood Zones A and B. Construction	No	Screened out

					methodology in accordance with best practice measures and Inland Fisheries Ireland guidelines. Designated contained areas for concrete pours / plant refuelling away from watercourses. Spill kits to be made available onsite.		
2.	Ground	Limerick City Southwest IE_SH_G-141	Drainage	Hydrocarbon Spillages	Designated contained areas for concrete pours. Drip trays for machinery. Site storage to be located within a bund. Construction methodology in accordance with best practice measures and Inland Fisheries Ireland guidelines.	No	Screened out

OPERATIONAL PHASE							
1.	Surface	Barnakyle_020	The existing drainage system of Raheen Business Park.	None. Surface water will be treated via SuDS. Only clean water will be discharged. 750m³ compensatory storage to be provided onsite (as per SSFRA).	None	No	Screened out
2.	Ground	Limerick City Southwest IE_SH_G-141	SuDS features with no infiltration.	None. Same as above.	None	No	Screened out