



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report

PL-500501-LK-25

Development	Primary Care Centre and associated site works. The proposed development is within the curtilage of the St. Joseph's Hospital a Protected Structure (RPS 3363).
Location	St. Joseph's Hospital Campus, Mulgrave Street, Limerick
Planning Authority	Limerick City and County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	2560205
Applicant(s)	Health Service Executive
Type of Application	Permission
Planning Authority Decision	Grant Permission + Conditions
Type of Appeal	Third Party Normal Planning Appeal
Appellant(s)	Timothy O'Connor
Observer(s)	None
Date of Site Inspection	09 th March 2026

Inspector

Matthew McRedmond

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Appendix 1 – Form 1: EIA Pre-Screening

Appendix 2: AA Screening

Appendix 3: Water Framework Directive Assessment

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The subject site is located at the St. Joseph's Hospital Campus, Mulgrave Street/R527/Ballysimon Road, Limerick City. The subject site is within the grounds of the existing hospital campus and is 7.52ha in area as stated, within the wider 14.38ha hospital campus. The site is located to the southeast of Limerick City Centre and forms part of this wider precinct.
- 1.2. The subject site is located at the eastern end of the hospital campus, to the west side of an existing residential building outside the site boundaries and to the south of an approximately 14m strip of land to the north side of the boundary wall of the hospital campus. The site is currently greenfield/vacant, with the Hammerhead Block of the St. Joseph's Hospital located immediately to the west. The lands to the south are also within the hospital campus and are currently vacant, with planning permission in place which I will reference in the following sections.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. The proposed development consists of the following:
- 4-storey primary care building with range of medical consulting services, café and all associated administrative and ancillary spaces.
 - Widening of existing access at Mulgrave Street
 - Widening of existing access road with new access road to serve subject site
 - New pedestrian access to Mulgrave Street
 - 110 car parking spaces
 - Landscaping, drainage and all associated site works.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

On the 24th November 2025, Limerick City and County Council granted permission for the subject proposal, subject to 14no. standard conditions.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. Planning Reports

The Local Authority Planner had regard to the locational context of the site, national and local planning policy context, the referral responses received, and any submissions made on the application. Their assessment included the following:

- The application and requirement for the proposed development are considered appropriate under the 'City Centre' zoning for the site and Objective SCS1 O15 – Health Care Facilities, of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 and is considered acceptable in principle.
- Noted that site is within the curtilage of a number of protected structures and as such Objective EH O50 applies. Architectural Conservation Officer (ACO) has submitted that the proposal would not unduly impact the setting of the protected structures due to the mitigation proposed and is acceptable. Conditions on architectural conservation method statement and monitoring of works recommended.
- In terms of scale, bulk, height and design, the proposed building is considered to be visually acceptable.
- Given separation distances involved, it is not considered that residential amenity would be impacted.
- Further details required in relation to transport including a TTA, an updated RSA, details of parking and surface water. Car and cycle parking spaces proposed are considered appropriate. Mobility management plan also to be requested by further information.

- Further details required in relation to connections to public water and sewer infrastructure.
- Landscaping and tree retention plans are noted.
- The Planning Authority did not have sufficient information to make a decision on the application, which was therefore the subject to a further information request on a number of items.

Further Information Response

3.2.2. The applicant submitted a further information response in July 2025 that included the following details:

- An updated cycle parking layout with 110 bike parking spaces.
- A Workplace Travel Plan to show an increase by sustainable modes from 18% to 25%.
- A Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) that assesses cumulative impacts that demonstrates the existing junction can accommodate projected traffic volumes. Further ongoing review is noted by the applicant as being undertaken in the Master Plan context for the wider site.
- Completed stage 1/2 Road Safety Audit that identifies potential safety issues and provides recommendations to mitigate risk. A revised site layout is provided to incorporate these recommendations including footpaths and pedestrian facility improvements. Revised parking layout also distinguishes staff and visitor parking and provides for EV charging (12no. spaces).
- Traffic calming measures are inherently incorporated to provide a low speed environment.
- Revised lighting design to cover proposed pedestrian and cycle track.
- Revised micro drainage calculations which includes hydraulic modelling for the 1-in-5 year return with a 30% allowance for climate change.
- Various proposed SuDs components to alleviate site specific risks of flood. Sections and a Storm Water Audit are also provided.

Planning Authority Response

- The Planning Authority were generally satisfied with the information provided in the further information submitted. Further details require clarification from Uisce Eireann in relation to connections to existing infrastructure. A Clarification of Further Information request was issued to the applicant in this regard. The applicant responded to this request with written correspondence from Uisce Eireann confirming feasibility of connection and the Planning Authority subsequently granted permission for the proposed development.

3.2.3. Other Technical Reports

- Architectural Conservation Officer– Proposal is acceptable from an architectural heritage protection perspective. Recommend a grant of permission subject to conditions in relation to architectural monitoring and a method statement.
- Active Travel Officer – Further details required in relation to cycle parking and a detailed Mobility Management Plan. Further information was submitted in this regard and considered acceptable by the Council Planner.
- Archaeology – No objection to the proposal subject to conditions in relation to monitoring and reporting of excavation works.
- Fire and Building Control – No objection in principle to the proposal subject to acquirement of appropriate fire safety and disability access certificates.
- Roads Department – Further details required in relation to TTA, RSA, footpaths, pedestrian crossings and mobility management plan, lighting design required and further SuDs details. Recommended a request for further information that was adequately responded to by the applicant and considered acceptable, subject to conditions.
- Environment and Climate Action – No objection subject to conditions on soil importation/exportation and resource waste management.

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

- 3.3.1. Uisce Eireann (UE) – Existing 15inch watermain at the site noted. Consultation with diversions and build over process required. Consultation was ongoing at FI response stage and a confirmation of feasibility was issued and submitted with the applicant's

response to the Clarification of Further Information Request. Standard UE conditions recommended with any grant of permission.

3.4. **Third Party Observations**

- 3.4.1. There was 1no. third party submission on the subject application, with no specific details submitted within the observation in relation to the proposal.

4.0 **Planning History**

- 4.1.1. Although the site is within the wider St. Joseph's Hospital Campus, there is no planning history for the subject site specifically. Relevant applications within the wider boundaries of the hospital site are as follows:

Limerick City and County Council (LCCC) Ref. 24/60583: Application for a single storey temporary building to the south of the subject site to house Chronic Disease Management Services and associated works. This application site is accessed from the existing circulation route to the south and was granted permission by LCCC.

LCCC Ref. 24/60563: Permission granted for a two storey building for the child and adolescent mental health service including the provision of new access road. This permitted development is to the immediate south of the subject appeal site and onward access to the site is proposed from the access road permitted under this development proposal.

5.0 **Policy Context**

5.1. **National and Regional Planning Policy**

- 5.1.1. The National Planning Framework (NPF) is the Government's high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of the country to the year 2040. A key element of the NPF is a commitment towards 'compact growth', which focuses on a more efficient use of land and resources through reusing previously developed or under-utilised land and buildings. National Strategic Outcome No. 1 is 'Compact Growth'. Activating strategic areas and achieving effective density and consolidation, rather than more sprawl of urban development, is a top priority.

5.1.2. The NPF contains several policy objectives that articulate the delivery of healthy communities as follows:

- **Section 6.2 Healthy Communities** - Sláintecare and a universal health and social care system is the overarching vision and policy direction for Ireland's healthcare system. The objective is that everyone has access to "the right care, in the right place and at the right time".

- **National Policy Objective 36:** Support the objectives of public health policy including the Healthy Ireland Framework and the National Physical Activity Plan, through integrating such policies, where appropriate and at the applicable scale, with planning policy.

- **NSO 10 – Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services** - The development of new healthcare facilities requires that consideration be given to the location, number, profile and needs of the population to ensure access to the most appropriate care, while also ensuring quality of care, particularly in relation to more complex acute hospital services. The ongoing implementation of Sláintecare and the Strategic Healthcare Investment Framework will have an important influence on the type and scale of regional healthcare services.

Expanding Community and Primary Care is at the heart of the Sláintecare vision. The development of Primary Care Centres (PCCs) is an important part of this vision. This will include the appropriate provision of PCCs, and accommodation based on local service and population needs. Expansion of primary care will involve refurbishments of existing buildings and where necessary new builds.

5.1.3. Within the RSES for the Southern Region, Limerick City is identified as the largest urban centre in Ireland's Mid-West and the country's third largest city. The site is located within the 'Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area'. The RSES incorporates Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans (MASP) to ensure coordination between local authority plans. It is noted within the RSES, that the NPF supports ambitious growth targets to enable Limerick City to grow by at least 50% to 2040 and to achieve its potential to become a city of scale.

5.1.4. Section 7.1.2 relates to Healthy Communities, and the following Regional Policy Objectives are relevant:

- **RPO 117 Childcare, Education, and Health Services** - It is an objective to improve access to quality childcare, education, and health services through initiatives and projects under the National Development Plan, alignment with Healthy Ireland and support development of outreach and community services for an expanding and ageing population.
- **RPO 118 - Universal Health Services** It is an objective to seek the delivery of better universal health services including mental health, at all levels of service delivery, including provision of 24 Hour Accident and Emergency Services and implementation of Sláintecare for an expanding and ageing population across the Region.

5.1.5. Relevant national policy also includes Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements: Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2024 ('the Compact Settlement Guidelines') which supports the more intensive use of sites in locations served by existing facilities and public transport. The Compact Settlement Guidelines supersede the Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas and accompanying Urban Design Manual.

5.1.6. Section 4.4 of the Compact Settlement Guidelines provides key indicators of quality design and placemaking, which includes sustainable and efficient movement, ensuring places are well connected and accessible by sustainable modes and not dominated by cars. The Guidelines state that active travel should be prioritised through design measures that seek to calm traffic and create street networks that feel safe and comfortable for pedestrians and cyclists.

5.1.7. Section 2.3 of the Compact guidelines references the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets. It is noted that this manual puts well-designed streets at the heart of sustainable communities. DMURS places a strong focus on the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport and on improving the safety of streets and enhancing placemaking.

5.2. **Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS), DoTTS, March 2013**

5.2.1. In terms of the design of the proposed development, including the entrance and access to the site, it is a requirement that they be considered against the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS), DoTTS, March 2013. This Manual replaces DMRB in respect of all urban roads and streets and it does not differentiate between public and private urban streets, where a 60kph speed limit or less applies. The implementation of DMURS is obligatory and divergence from same requires written consent from relevant sanctioning authority (NRA, NTA or DTT&S). The Manual seeks to address street design within urban areas (i.e. cities, towns and villages) and it sets out an integrated design approach. Section 2.2.2 of the Manual addresses user priorities, that places pedestrians at the top of the user hierarchy. The need for walkable communities is provided as an issue of social equality, and design for pedestrians should be prioritised, with cyclists also given high priority.

5.3. **National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP) 2023-2030**

5.3.1. 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 Commission, 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 Commission. 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.

5.4. **Climate Action Plan, 2025 [CAP25]**

5.4.1. It is noted within CAP25 that Key targets to further reduce transport emissions include a 20% reduction in total vehicle kilometres travelled relative to business-as usual, a 50% reduction in fuel usage, and significant increases to sustainable transport trips and modal share. In relation to buildings, it is noted that operational emissions in the built environment sector have decreased by 21% since 2018, and achievement of the first sectoral emissions ceilings is within reach. In 2025 it is

proposed to transpose the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive, publish a roadmap to phase out fossil fuel boilers, and increase the numbers of building energy rating (BER) assessors, OneStop-Shops, and Sustainable Energy Communities. It is stated within the Plan that, CAP25 is to be read in conjunction with CAP24, and as such I have set out a summary of same below.

5.5. **Climate Action Plan, 2024. [CAP24]**

- 5.5.1. Implements carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings and sets a roadmap for taking decisive action to halve our emissions by 2030 and reach net zero no later than 2050. By 2030, the plan calls for a 40% reduction in emissions from residential buildings and a 50% reduction in transport emissions. The reduction in transport emissions includes a 20% reduction in total vehicle kilometres, a reduction in fuel usage, significant increases in sustainable transport trips, and improved modal share.

5.6. **Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028**

- 5.6.1. The Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 is the relevant statutory plan that applies to the subject site. The site is located within the 'Colbert Quarter' precinct of Limerick City.

Zoning

- 5.6.2. The appeal site has a land use zoning of 'City Centre' which has an objective to *'protect, consolidate and facilitate the development of the City Centre commercial, retail, educational, leisure, residential, social and community uses and facilities.'*
- 5.6.3. The purpose of this zoning is to *'consolidate Limerick City Centre through densification of appropriate commercial and residential developments ensuring a mix of commercial, recreational, civic, cultural, leisure, residential uses and urban streets, while delivering a high-quality urban environment which will enhance the quality of life of residents, visitors and workers alike. The zone will strengthen retail provision in accordance with the Retail Strategy for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick, emphasise urban conservation, ensure priority for public transport, pedestrians and cyclists, while minimising the impact of private car-based traffic and enhancing the existing urban fabric.'*

5.6.4. Relevant objectives include:

- Objective CGR P1 Compact Growth and Revitalisation - It is a policy of the Council to achieve sustainable intensification and consolidation, in accordance with the Core Strategy, through an emphasis on revitalisation and the delivery of more compact and consolidated growth, integrating land use and transport, with the use of higher densities and mixed use developments.
- Objective CAF O3 Sustainable Development - To support sustainable travel, energy efficient projects, provision of green spaces and open space and sustainable residential development projects, as a means of addressing climate change.
- Objective CSQ O1b - Colbert Quarter: It is an objective of the Council to support the implementation of the Colbert Quarter Spatial Framework along with its principles, which include the creation of 8 distinctive Neighbourhoods which form the Colbert Quarter as follows:

...

D) This district incorporates proposed development plots to address HSE priorities with flexibility for review, adaptation and expansion depending on future needs and priorities. Proposals seek to enhance accessibility and the public realm around the buildings and site and provide for research and innovation space.

- Objective SCSO O15 – Health Care Facilities – Objective to support and facilitate the development and expansion of health services.
- Objective EH O50 – Work to Protected Structures – Objective relates to works to protected structures and their curtilage and setting.

5.6.5. Chapter 11 of the Development Plan includes Development Management Standards, with Section 11.5.3 referring to health care facilities. Large scale and group medical practices are normally only to be located in major town or city centres.

Colbert Quarter Spatial Framework Strategy 2022-2028

5.6.6. The Colbert Quarter Spatial Framework, as identified under objective CSQ O1b of the Limerick Development Plan, refers to the Colbert Quarter Area which is a 69ha.

brownfield site zoned City Centre, surrounding Colbert Station including the railway and bus stations, St. Joseph's Hospital Campus, recreational lands and lands in private ownership. The redevelopment of the lands is being led by the LDA along with other State Bodies including Limerick City and County Council, CIE and the HSE.

5.6.7. The subject site is located within the Ballysimon District as set out in Section 3.3.4 of the Framework Plan. The plan indicatively identifies the subject site for new healthcare facilities and adjoining a new access junction to the Ballysimon Road and new access road through the site.

5.6.8. I note a draft Masterplan for the St. Joseph's Hospital Site was also published in November 2023 that excludes the subject site that is identified as outside the design boundary for that specific masterplan. The Masterplan does provide 'indicative blocks' at the subject site.

5.7. **Natural Heritage Designations**

5.7.1. The following designated sites are located within 15km of the appeal site:

- Lower River Shannon SAC (site code: 2165) approximately 1.1km to the north.
- River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA (site code: 4077) approximately 1.5km to the north.

5.8. **EIA Screening**

5.8.1. I have had regard to the determination of the Planning Authority in relation to EIAR requirements. Having regard to the nature of the proposed development comprising the development of a 4-storey primary care centre, within an established urban area and where infrastructural services are available, there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development. The need for environmental impact assessment can, therefore, be excluded at preliminary examination and a screening determination is not required. See completed Form 1 and 2 at Appendix 1.

6.0 The Appeal

6.1. Grounds of Appeal

- 6.1.1. A third-party appeal has been submitted against the decision of Limerick City and County Council to grant permission for the proposal. The grounds of the appeal may be summarised as follows:

Piecemeal Development

- Proposal completely disregards the Colbert Quarter Spatial Framework (CQSF), which includes a strong building line and active frontage to Mulgrave Street/Ballysimon Road and includes the appellant's land.
- Figures 2 and 5 from Page 83 of the CQSF are referenced in terms of land uses identified that include new healthcare facilities, new homes and a new entrance to Mulgrave Street/Ballysimon Road. Design height of 5-6 storeys is also referenced.
- Unacceptable that the HSE were allowed to disregard the provisions of this plan. This is compounded by the Limerick City and County Council (LCCC) decision to grant permission as they are co-owners of the CQSF document.

Future Development Potential

- Proximity of proposal to the appellant's boundary will not allow the development as envisaged in the CQSF, which is a 5-6 storey building fronting Mulgrave Street. This is despite numerous consultations with the HSE, with minutes of meeting appended to the appeal.

Insufficient Access

- The proposal fails to adhere to the CQSF and CDP Objective to provide new pedestrian and vehicular entrances to Mulgrave Street/Ballysimon Road. This is a critical piece of infrastructure for the wider area and creates a circuitous route to the proposed development.
- Travel distances are much greater as a result of using the existing entrance instead of a new entrance as intended. Vehicular traffic must travel 700m instead of 50m, and pedestrians 350m instead of 50m.

- Widening of the existing entrance also impacts on the historical context.
- The traffic through the site and associated wayfinding signage will have a negative effect on the historical context of the protected structures within the site and is contrary to the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines as this impact could have been avoided through the provision of a new entrance at the intended location.

Bat Impacts

- No surveying of bat habitats or resting places was undertaken within the meaning of Article 12 of the Habitats Directive.
- Despite reference to 'further survey efforts' there does not seem to have been any.
- The bat assessment is flawed as the full extent of the site is not reviewed, where there is plenty of scope for roosts existing.
- ECIA does not include bat survey, despite known bat activity in the Ballysimon area. A bat habitat appraisal assessment only is provided.
- Applications in the wider area are referenced (312428-22 and 317686-23), where bat activity was recorded in high levels.
- Application should be refused on the grounds of failure to properly assess potential impacts on bats.

Proposed Masterplan Entrance

- Proposed new entrance to Mulgrave Street is indicated across the appellant's land, without his consent. The applicant has indicated this would be constructed at some point in the future and is a clear attempt to circumvent the framework plan in place.
- The proposed masterplan illustration clearly shows the appellants development potential is compromised, with no room for the 5-6 storey building fronting Mulgrave Street/Ballysimon Road as envisaged in the CQSF.

Works to Existing Entrance

- The proposed widening of the existing entrance shows poor conservation practice as an alternative new access could have been provided without the impacts shown.

Vehicular and Pedestrian Entrances

- Pedestrian and vehicular entrances proposed results in an overly circuitous route to reach the proposed PCC. This is caused by the failure to provide a new entrance as per the CQSF Masterplan.

6.2. Applicant Response

- 6.2.1. The applicant has provided a response to the third-party appeal. This response may be summarised as follows:

Background

- The applicant has expended significant time and effort to consult with the appellant in relation to the possible acquisition and potential strategy for the appellant's land, but no agreement could be reached. The appeal is primarily driven by unresolved private ownership matters, which are not material planning considerations.

Validity of Appeal

- No valid submission at application stage as the appellant did not include any grounds for submission during the process, which is contrary to permission regulations. The appeal should therefore be dismissed by the Commission as a valid acknowledgement should not have issued under Section 127 of the Planning and Development Act.

Summary Points

- Appeal is based on issues with a non-statutory document (Colbert Quarter Strategic Framework, CQSF) that does not warrant a refusal of permission.
- Proposal has had regard to the CQSF and does not restrict its deliverability, including access to Mulgrave Street/Ballysimon Road.
- Access is provided via an existing entrance that has been assessed in detail from an engineering perspective and is considered acceptable by Limerick

City and County Council Roads Department. Proposal has also been reviewed from a Conservation perspective, and the proposed methodology is considered acceptable.

- Proposal is completely contained within the applicant's land holding and development potential of adjoining lands is not impacted.
- The submitted bat assessment identified no bat roosts or locations of roost potential within the development footprint. No objections were raised by the planning authority or prescribed bodies in this regard.
- Appeal seeks to raise private development expectations above the strategic requirement for a Primary Care Centre at an appropriately serviced urban site. The proposal has been appropriately assessed across all disciplines, and the applicant asks that the Planning Authority decision is upheld and permission is granted.

Development Proposal

- The applicant provided a summary of the Development Proposal and purpose in relation to health services in the area.
- The Primary Care Centre is required to accommodate two existing Primary Care Teams currently operating from substandard and fragmented premises within Limerick City. The proposal also allows for future expansion and synergies with existing health services.

Response to Grounds of Appeal – Item 1:

- The CQSF is not a statutory plan. The Limerick CDP is the relevant statutory plan and while this supports the implementation of the CQSF, there is no indication that it must be stringently adhered to. Access to the north in the future is facilitated and other landholdings are not compromised.

Response to Grounds of Appeal – Item 2:

- The vision for the development of the appellant's land as set out in the CQSF has not been compromised by the development proposal. The existing 14.5m depth is maintained and the proposal responds appropriately to the historic setting.

Response to Grounds of Appeal – Item 3:

- Future pedestrian and vehicular access points are identified in the overall site masterplan and will be delivered as part of later phases. The proposal does not generate sufficient traffic to require a second entrance at this stage and does not compromise future provision of additional access points.
- Pedestrian permeability is enhanced by the provision of a new access gate aligned with the St. Joseph's building. This access was already granted permission under Ref. 24/60563.

Response to Grounds of Appeal – Item 4:

- The appeal cases referenced in the subject appeal are 3km from the subject site and bare no relevance to the subject proposal. An ECIA was submitted with the application that includes a review of bats and the associated habitat suitability of the site area. The report concludes the proposal is of low suitability to bats due to absence of trees or structures that would provide roost habitat.
- The proposal incorporates appropriate avoidance and protection measures, and the project can proceed without risk to bat populations, in accordance with requirements of the Wildlife Acts or EU Habitats Directive.

Response to Grounds of Appeal – Item 5:

- Although a new entrance is indicatively shown across third party lands on the submitted Masterplan, this is indicative only and does not form part of the Planning Application. The link is purely to show how the site can be integrated with the surrounding area and is not a requirement for the proposal to operate efficiently. This ground of appeal is not substantiated and is not a valid reason for refusal.

Response to Grounds of Appeal – Item 6:

- The proposed traffic movements will result in an increase of 1.93% traffic on the R527, which is not considered significant. This allows for existing and proposed traffic.

- The permitted pedestrian entrance to be used by the proposal will reduce travel time for sustainable modes. The access through the site respects the historic setting and will not be of a significant volume or lead to traffic congestion.

Response to Grounds of Appeal – Item 7:

- The appeal claims that alterations to the existing entrance at Mulgrave Street will result in a significant negative impact on the character of the protected structure is not substantiated with any detail in the appeal. The existing gates have been subject to modern, 20th century interventions and are not original fabric of the principal protected structures.
- The proposed interventions are considered positive as they remove the later addition of the pedestrian gate and will retain blockwork as well as the detailing of the exiting gate. The proposal does not involve the loss of significant historic fabric and does not alter the principal Protected Structures. The Planning Authority Architectural Conservation Officer is satisfied that the proposed development has been designed with due regard to the architectural significance of the site and is acceptable.
- The proposed development represents a proportionate response that avoids the need for more intrusive interventions elsewhere on the site or reliance on third party agreements.

Letter of Support from Land Development Agency (LDA)

- The applicant response also included an appended letter from the LDA in relation to the proposed development of the land. The letter states that the CQSF is not a statutory document, and exact details of building heights, siting, massing and design are intended to be considered at detailed design and planning application stage. The CQSF will ‘guide’ the future development of the area as set out at Section 3.4.4.1 of the Development Plan.
- Ground of Appeal No. 1 – The LDA letter provides a response to the main grounds of appeal and notes objective CSQ O1B of the Limerick Development Plan which provides for healthcare uses at the eastern end of the St. Joseph’s

Site and highlights the need for flexibility. The proposal fully aligns with the CQSF and is clearly not piecemeal development.

- Ground of Appeal No. 2 – The CQSF indicated the potential for some housing on third party lands along Ballysimon Road. The details and nature of any proposed scheme would be a matter for the third party landowner and the Local Authority. The proposed Primary Care Centre aligns with the more detailed non-statutory draft masterplan for the site, that identifies the HSE buildings adjacent to Ballysimon Road with details to be agreed at application stage.
- Ground of Appeal No. 3 – The CQSF is not prescriptive as to when the new access to Ballysimon Road must be provided and does not suggest it must be provided as part of initial phases of the development of the overall site. CQSF indicates use of existing access, a proposed new access to Ballysimon Road and pedestrian/cycle access from Roxboro Road. The proposal is therefore considered to be in keeping with the objectives and spirit of the CQSF.

6.3. Planning Authority Response

6.3.1. None received.

6.4. Observations

6.4.1. None.

7.0 Assessment

7.1. Having reviewed the details and appeal documentation on the file, the submissions made, having inspected the site, and having regard to relevant local and national policy and guidance, I conclude that the main issues are the following:

- Procedural Issues
- Piecemeal Development
- Impacts on Development Potential
- Bat Surveys

- Traffic and Transport

7.2. Procedural Issues

- 7.2.1. In their response to the appeal, the applicant submits that the appeal should be dismissed on foot of being contrary to permission regulations. It is submitted the appeal should be dismissed by the Commission as a valid acknowledgement should not have issued from the Planning Authority under Section 127 of the Planning and Development Act, due to an absence of sufficient grounds in the initial submission at application stage.
- 7.2.2. I refer to Article 29(1)(b) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), which refer to submission or observations in relation to a planning application. This section of the regulations stipulates that any submission received shall include the name of the person making the submission or observation and address for where to send any relating correspondence. The regulations as referred to by the applicant do not specifically require adequate grounds of submission at that stage, as opposed to the requirements for statement of full grounds of an appeal as required under Section 127(1)(d) of the Planning and Development Act as amended.
- 7.2.3. Although it is not a function of the Commission to adjudicate on the validity or otherwise of applications and associated submissions, I conclude the appeal is supported by a valid acknowledgement of a submission received from the Planning Authority and proceed to review the grounds of appeal in the following sections.

7.3. Piecemeal Development

- 7.3.1. The appeal sets out that the subject proposal completely disregards the Colbert Quarter Spatial Framework, which identifies the subject site and the appellant's land for development fronting Mulgrave Street/Balysimon Road.
- 7.3.2. The applicant submits that although the CQSF is a non-statutory document, the proposal has had regard to it and appropriately allows for the development of the area.
- 7.3.3. I have had regard to the details submitted with the planning application, the appeal submission, The Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 and the provisions of the Colbert Quarter Spatial Framework (CQSF). While the appeal and application documents, including the response to the appeal, acknowledge there has been some

liaison between the parties, the subject application has been undertaken on independent grounds, without the inclusion of third-party lands.

- 7.3.4. I note the Limerick Development Plan and Objective CSQ O1b to support the implementation of the CQSF.
- 7.3.5. Section 3.3.4 of the CQSF itself includes a figure identifying the subject site and surrounding lands, that includes the matters highlighted in the appeal including new homes, new entrance and new healthcare uses but also, crucially, includes relevant text that refers to '*Conceptual Plan for Illustrative Purposes and subject to more detailed design and planning approval*'. I consider this note to be intrinsic to the grounds of the appeal and note the framework plan is a guidance document that does not require stringent adherence in relation to built form and configuration.
- 7.3.6. The subject proposal is setback approximately 9m from the boundary with lands to the north and the overall proposal and site layout includes a spur from the proposed access roundabout to provide onward access to the north in the future. I consider the subject proposal to provide a Primary Care Centre supports the overall theme for this district, which is to provide healthcare services. While the masterplan layouts submitted by the applicant and included in the framework plan present in an alternative manner to that proposed within the final detail of the Planning application drawings, I consider this to be acceptable in the context of proper and sustainable development in the manner envisaged in such guidance documents.
- 7.3.7. I do not consider the subject proposal to be piecemeal development, with adjoining lands outside the ownership of the applicant being largely unencumbered by the proposed development footprint. This is also subject to detailed review of other planning and environmental impacts as set out in the following sections.

7.4. Impacts on Development Potential

- 7.4.1. The appeal submits a detailed breakdown of ongoing efforts by the appellant to reach agreement with the applicant in relation to their land that lies along the northern boundary of the application site and fronting on to Mulgrave Street/Ballysimon Road. The appeal claims the development potential of their land is compromised as a result of the failure of the applicant to include their lands in the proposal.

- 7.4.2. I have reviewed the appeal details in relation to the appellant's land ownership and note specifically their land parcel that is located on the northern side of the existing boundary wall of St. Joseph's Hospital Campus. I acknowledge the CQSF indicates built form to the road edge in the indicative illustrations provided, but I am also mindful that individual planning applications are design lead and subject to specific operational requirements, and as discussed in the preceding section, are not required to comply with any specific standards or built form outlined in the Framework Plan. The applicant has sought to independently progress the development of their site for a Primary Care Centre that is supported by policy set out in the Limerick Development Plan including objectives CSQ O1b and SCSi O15.
- 7.4.3. The proposed development is set back a distance of between 9-12m from the northern boundary. Furthermore, I note the land parcel to the north is over 14m in depth and over 150m in length. The built footprint of the proposed primary care centre occupies a width of c. 49m along the boundary interface, which I consider adequately responds to the surrounding context and does not result in significant impacts on landholdings in the vicinity.
- 7.4.4. I find that there is no statutory requirement for any development proposal to incorporate surrounding landowners, and the applicant has shown sufficient evidence to illustrate the proposal can operate without any significant impacts on the surrounding environment as I have reviewed in this assessment and following sections.

7.5. **Bat Surveys**

- 7.5.1. The appeal submits that the application does not provide a sufficient survey of existing bat conditions at the subject site and the proposal may have impacts on bat activity in the surrounding area.
- 7.5.2. I note the Ecological Impact Assessment as submitted by the applicant, that includes details of a bat survey and habitat assessment for the subject site. I am satisfied that given the largely grassland nature of the subject site, and the adequate suitability assessment as carried out by the applicant, that there are no suitable foraging or commuting habitats within the footprint of the development proposal. The applicant acknowledges the presence of treelines, open grasslands and scattered trees with

dark corridors in the wider site and area but concludes the proposed works will not impact these habitats.

- 7.5.3. I find that appropriate survey work has been undertaken by the applicant to confirm that no feature has been identified within the development footprint as providing roosting potential for bats. I note the overall site provides 'high potential' for roosting within historic buildings but given the details provided in the lighting plan submitted with the application with a limited lighting corridor and downward cowls fitted to lighting fixtures, I am satisfied that any lighting impacts on bat activity in the area can be adequately mitigated.
- 7.5.4. As there are no works to any buildings proposed and no trees are to be removed from the subject site, I am satisfied that more detailed surveys of bat activity are not required and the subject proposal will have limited impacts on bat activity in the wider area.
- 7.5.5. I note the appeal reference to 2no. other appeals in the wider area. These individual appeals were considered on their own merits, and I consider their individual contexts to be removed from the appeal site, with no relevant bearing on the consideration of bat activity at this location.

7.6. Traffic and Transport

- 7.6.1. The appeal notes a number of issues around the traffic and transport impacts of the proposal including the circuitous route proposed as a result of using the existing vehicular entrance to the site, the extra distance pedestrians must travel by not providing the entrance to Mulgrave Street/Ballysimon Road as set out in the CQSF and the conservation impacts of amending the existing entrance, which is caused by not providing a new entrance closer to the proposed structure.
- 7.6.2. I note the Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) submitted by the applicant at FI stage, along with a Workplace Travel Plan aimed at minimising traffic and promoting sustainable travel. I note the traffic analysis for the existing junction forecasts an increase of a maximum of 22no. vehicle movements for both AM and PM peak times, which represents an increase of up to 1.93% at the R527/Mulgrave Street entrance. I do not consider this to represent a significant level of additional traffic impact on the network and find it to be a reasonable conclusion that this level of traffic does not merit the provision of a new access point individually.

- 7.6.3. The submitted TTA does not provide an analysis of cumulative traffic movements for other permitted developments within the site that will use the existing access junction, however I am satisfied that a worst case scenario has been presented, with all staff and patients of the PCC assumed to arrive and leave the site at the same peak hours. This would clearly not occur in reality and allows for a degree of certainty in relation to the capacity of the access junction to cater for future traffic.
- 7.6.4. The appeal refers to unacceptable conservation impacts of alterations to the access to allow for widening. I note the subject site is within the curtilage of St. Joseph's Hospital, which is a Protected Structure (RPS No. 3257), with 6no. individual protected structures within the overall site. I note the subject proposal is closest to the Hammerhead Block (RPS 6015).
- 7.6.5. I have had regard to the Architectural Conservation submission of the applicant and note the existing pedestrian gate is identified as a later 20th Century addition to the existing entrance. I acknowledge that the Planning Authority Architectural Conservation Officer raised no issue with the proposed amendments to the access gates nor the overall proposal, given separation distances and choice of materials and screening by existing and proposed trees. The applicant has committed to undertake a detailed labelling and reconstruction of access piers and to maintain the detail of the existing access gate. Given the access gate has been subject to 20th Century interventions and the relatively limited level of additional traffic as a result of the proposal, I am satisfied that the proposal will not lead to a significant conservation impact, and that the proposed interventions to the access gate are justified for a necessary provision of health care infrastructure to the city area.
- 7.6.6. I consider the wider benefits of providing the subject proposal at this location to outweigh the identified negligible traffic impacts. The site is in a City Centre location, supports CDP Objectives CGR P1 in relation to compact growth, CSQ O1b in relation to the development of the Colbert Quarter by supporting HSE requirements and Objective SCSI O15 in relation to the provision healthcare facilities. The site is easily accessible to a critical mass of population, a range of amenities and services in the area including public transport and complementary health services, will provide an essential service to the wider area in terms of healthcare and as provided for under CDP policy as outlined in the Development Plan that seek to provide these services in accessible locations. I note the Roads Department of the Planning

Authority found the subject proposal to be acceptable subject to conditions following the receipt of the submitted workplace travel plan and TTA.

- 7.6.7. In addition, the overall upgrades to improve the access point at Mulgrave Street and enhance pedestrian/cyclist access to the health campus of St. Joseph's, will enhance the overall environment of this area of the city and I therefore see no reason to refuse permission on traffic and transport grounds in this instance.
- 7.6.8. I consider the subject proposal to contribute positively to the immediate area by enhancing placemaking and contribution to the principles of the 15-minute city, good accessibility to public transport, enhancement of the mix of uses in the area without impacting negatively on adjoining properties, and enhanced public realm with appropriate management of traffic generation and movements.

8.0 Appropriate Assessment

- 8.1.1. I have considered the proposed development of this Primary Care Centre and associated site works in light of the requirements S177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended (refer to Appendix 2). The closest Natura 2000 sites are the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA (Site Code: 004077) located 1.57km north of the site and Lower River Shannon SAC (Site Code: 002165) located 1.13km north of the site.
- 8.1.2. The proposed development comprises the construction of a Primary Care Centre and all associated site works.

Screening Determination: Finding of no likely significant effects

- 8.1.3. 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 any European Site(s) 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 nature and scale of the works

- Location-distance from nearest European site and lack of direct connections between the application site and any SAC/SPA
- Taking into account the screening determination by the PA.

8.1.4. Please refer to the attached appendices for detailed Stage 1 Appropriate Assessment.

9.0 **Water Framework Directive Assessment**

9.1. I conclude that on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development will not result in a risk of deterioration on any water body (rivers, lakes, groundwaters, transitional and coastal) either qualitatively or quantitatively or on a temporary or permanent basis or otherwise jeopardise any water body in reaching its WFD objectives based on the mitigation measures, drainage arrangements and management of surface water as set out in the proposed development. Please see WFD Assessment attached at Appendix 3 of this report.

10.0 **Recommendation**

10.1. I recommend that permission be granted based on the following reasons and considerations, and subject to the attached conditions.

11.0 **Reasons and Considerations**

11.1. Having regard to the zoning objective of the site in the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028, to the principle of the proposal within the City Centre that is easily accessible, to the infill nature of the site, and to the pattern of development in the vicinity, it is considered that the proposed development would not seriously injure the development potential of property in the vicinity, would represent an appropriate land use at this location, would be acceptable in terms of traffic safety, would not endanger public health, and would comply with the relevant provisions of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028, the National Planning Framework, and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the southern region. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

12.0 Conditions

1.	<p>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 13th day of March 2025, as amended by the further plans and particulars submitted on the 02nd day of April, 2025, the 29th day of July, 2025, and the 28th day of October, 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.</p> <p>Reason: In the interest of clarity.</p>
2.	<p>Details of the materials, colours and textures of all the external finishes to the proposed buildings and boundaries shall be as submitted with the application, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the planning authority, prior to commencement of development.</p> <p>Reason: In the interest of visual amenity.</p>
3.	<p>Drainage arrangements including the attenuation and disposal of surface water shall comply with the requirements of the relevant Section of the Council for such works and services.</p> <p>Reason: In the interest of public health and surface water management.</p>
4.	<p>The developer shall enter into water and wastewater connection agreements with Uisce Éireann, prior to commencement of development.</p> <p>Reason: In the interests of clarity and public health.</p>
5.	<p>The following requirements in terms of traffic, transportation and mobility shall be incorporated into the development and where required, revised plans and particulars demonstrating compliance with these requirements</p>

	<p>shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) A Stage 3 Road Safety Audit shall be completed and submitted for the written agreement of the Planning Authority, in accordance with TII Publication 'Road Safety Audit GE-STY-01024'. b) The applicant shall address all issues identified in the Stage 3 Road Safety Audit and submit revised Site Layout Plans incorporating the audit recommendations. These revisions must be clearly labelled and submitted for approval by the Planning Authority. Limerick City & County Council Planning Department. Inspection Purposes Only! c) Accessible parking spaces shall comply with the standards set out in the Irish Wheelchair Association's Design Manual. d) All road markings shall comply with IS EN 1436 European Standard for Road Markings and the Traffic Signs Manual. Road signage shall also comply with these standards. The applicant shall ensure that all road markings and signage are maintained in good condition. <p>Reason: In the interests of traffic, cyclist and pedestrian safety and sustainable travel.</p>
6.	<p>A monitoring report assessing the effectiveness of the Mobility Management Plan, including progress towards the modal split targets and sustainable transport measures, shall be submitted to the Planning Authority within one month of the first anniversary of the first occupation of the development. The report shall include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Updated modal split data for staff and visitors. b) Assessment of progress against the targets set out in the approved Mobility Management Plan. c) Details of any corrective measures or additional actions proposed to achieve compliance with the targets.

	<p>Further monitoring reports shall be submitted on the third and fifth anniversaries of the first occupation of the development, in the same format.</p> <p>Reason: In the interest of encouraging the use of sustainable modes of transport.</p>
7.	<p>Public lighting shall be provided in accordance with a scheme which shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the planning authority prior to the commencement of development. The scheme shall include lighting along pedestrian routes.</p> <p>Reason: In the interest of amenity and public safety and to minimise disturbance to bats.</p>
8.	<p>All service cables associated with the proposed development (such as electrical, telecommunications and communal television) shall be located underground. The cables shall avoid roots of any trees and hedgerows to be retained in the site. Ducting shall be provided by the developer to facilitate the provision of broadband infrastructure within the proposed development.</p> <p>Reason: In the interests of visual and residential amenity.</p>
9.	<p>A plan containing details for the management of waste within the development, including the provision of facilities for the storage, separation and collection of the waste and, in particular, recyclable materials and health related waste shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development. Thereafter, the waste shall be managed in accordance with the agreed plan.</p> <p>Reason: To provide for the appropriate management of waste and, in particular recyclable materials and health-related waste, in the interest of protecting the environment and orderly disposal of waste.</p>
10.	<p>Prior to commencement of works, the developer shall submit to, and agree in writing with the planning authority, a Construction Management Plan, which shall be adhered to during construction. This plan shall provide details of intended construction practice for the development, including</p>

	<p>hours of working, noise and dust management measures, fuel storage, and off-site disposal of construction/demolition waste.</p> <p>Reason: In the interest of public safety and amenity.</p>
11.	<p>Construction and demolition waste shall be managed in accordance with a construction waste and demolition management plan, which shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development. This plan shall be prepared in accordance with the “Best Practice Guidelines on the Preparation of Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects”, published by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in July 2006. The plan shall include details of waste to be generated during site clearance and construction phases, and details of the methods and locations to be employed for the prevention, minimisation, recovery and disposal of this material in accordance with the provision of the Waste Management Plan for the Region in which the site is situated.</p> <p>Reason: In the interest of sustainable waste management.</p>
12.	<p>The construction of the development shall be managed in accordance with a Construction and Traffic Management Plan, which shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development. This plan shall provide details of intended construction practice for the development, including:</p> <p>(a) Location of the site and materials compound(s) including area(s) identified for the storage of construction refuse;</p> <p>(b) Location of areas for construction site offices and staff facilities;</p> <p>(c) Details of site security fencing and hoardings;</p> <p>(d) Details of on-site car parking facilities for site workers during the course of construction;</p> <p>(e) Details of the timing and routing of construction traffic to and from the construction site and associated directional signage, to include proposals to facilitate the delivery of abnormal loads to the site;</p>

	<p>(f) Measures to obviate queuing of construction traffic on the adjoining road network;</p> <p>(g) Measures to prevent the spillage or deposit of clay, rubble or other debris on the public road network;</p> <p>(h) Alternative arrangements to be put in place for pedestrians and vehicles in the case of the closure of any public road or footpath during the course of site development works;</p> <p>(i) Details of appropriate mitigation measures for noise, dust and vibration, and monitoring of such levels;</p> <p>(j) Containment of all construction-related fuel and oil within specially constructed bunds to ensure that fuel spillages are fully contained. Such bunds shall be roofed to exclude rainwater;</p> <p>(k) Off-site disposal of construction/demolition waste and details of how it is proposed to manage excavated soil;</p> <p>(l) Means to ensure that surface water run-off is controlled such that no silt or other pollutants enter local surface water sewers or drains.</p> <p>(m) A record of daily checks that the works are being undertaken in accordance with the Construction Management Plan shall be available for inspection by the planning authority.</p> <p>Reason: In the interest of amenities, public health and safety and environmental protection.</p>
13.	<p>Site development and building works shall be carried out only between the hours of 0700 to 1900 Mondays to Saturdays inclusive, and not at all on Sundays and public holidays. Deviation from these times will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances where prior written approval has been received from the planning authority.</p> <p>Reason: In order to safeguard the amenities of property in the vicinity.</p>
14.	<p>Proposals for a development name, commercial unit identification and numbering scheme and associated signage shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of</p>

	<p>development. Thereafter, all such names and numbering shall be provided in accordance with the agreed scheme.</p> <p>Reason: In the interest of urban legibility.</p>
15.	<p>Prior to the commencement of development, the applicant shall submit for the written agreement of the planning authority a specification and method statement, covering all works to be carried out, to ensure the development is carried out in accordance with good conservation practice, including works to the existing entrance and the stone boundary walls. The development shall be completed in accordance with the agreed details.</p> <p>Reason: In the interest of the protection of architectural heritage (in accordance with the provisions of the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities).</p>
16.	<p>The developer shall preserve, protect or otherwise record archaeological materials or features that may exist within the site by ensuring that all ground disturbance associated with the site development is archaeologically monitored under licence from the National Monuments Service. In this regard, the developer shall – a. Notify the Planning Authority in writing at least four weeks prior to the commencement of any site operation (including hydrological and geotechnical investigations) relating to the proposed development. b. Employ a suitably qualified archaeologist who shall apply for a licence to monitor all site investigations, excavation works and all ground disturbance associated with the development. c. Submit the name of the suitably qualified archaeologist to the Planning Authority four weeks in advance of the commencement of any site works (including site investigations) accompanied by a site specific letter from the archaeologist certifying that they have applied for a licence.</p> <p>Reason - In order to conserve the archaeological heritage of the site and to secure the preservation of any remains which may exist within the site.</p>
17.	<p>The developer shall submit the following to the Planning Authority:</p> <p>a) On completion of the ground works a report detailing the results of the licensed archaeological monitoring works to the Department of</p>

Housing, Local Government & Heritage and the Planning Authority. The report shall contain a drawing showing the exact extent of the area that was archaeologically monitored and certified by the archaeologist. Excavators should include a catalogue of excavated features with 12 figure ITM coordinates for the centre point of each feature. In the event that the development is phased, interim reports shall be submitted at each stage showing the area monitored and giving preliminary results.

- b) Should archaeological material be found during the course of monitoring, the archaeologist may have work on the site stopped, pending a decision as to how best to deal with the archaeology. The Development Applications Unit, National Monuments Service, Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage and the Planning Authority Archaeologist shall be informed immediately. The developer shall be prepared to be advised by the National Monuments Service, Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage and the Planning Authority with regard to any necessary mitigating action.
- c) Should an archaeological excavation be required then the following shall apply: the developer shall provide satisfactory arrangements for the recording and excavation of any archaeological material that may be considered appropriate to excavate and shall undertake to complete all post excavation analysis up to and including final report stage. Excavators should include a catalogue of excavated features with 12 figure ITM coordinates for the centre point of each feature. Within twelve months of the completion of the excavation a final report (in the format recommended in the Guidelines for Authors of Reports on Archaeological Excavations 2006 National Monuments Service) shall be submitted to the Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to conserve the archaeological heritage of the site and to secure the preservation of any remains which may exist within the site

18.	<p>The management and maintenance of the proposed development, following completion, shall be the responsibility of a legally constituted management company, which shall be established by the developer. A management scheme, providing adequate measures for the future maintenance of the development; including the external fabric of the buildings, internal common areas, landscaping, roads, paths, parking areas, lighting, waste storage facilities and sanitary services, shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the planning authority, before the proposed development and any of the commercial units are made available for occupation.</p> <p>Reason: To provide for the future maintenance of this private development in the interest of visual amenity.</p>
19.	<p>Prior to commencement of development, the developer shall lodge with the planning authority a cash deposit, a bond of an insurance company, or other security to secure the provision and satisfactory completion and maintenance until taken in charge by the local authority of roads, footpaths, watermains, drains, public open space and other services required in connection with the development, coupled with an agreement empowering the local authority to apply such security or part thereof to the satisfactory completion or maintenance of any part of the development. The form and amount of the security shall be as agreed between the planning authority and the developer or, in default of agreement, shall be referred to An Bord Pleanála for determination.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure the satisfactory completion and maintenance of the development until taken in charge.</p>
20.	<p>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</p>

<p>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 Bord Pleanála to determine the proper application of the terms of the Scheme.</p> <p>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.</p>

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.

Matthew McRedmond
Senior Planning Inspector

24th March 2026

Appendix 1 - Form 1

EIA Pre-Screening

[EIAR not submitted]

Case Reference	PL-500501-LK-25
Proposed Development Summary	Primary Care Centre, Consulting Rooms, Retail Café and all associated site works
Development Address	St. Joseph's Hospital Campus, Mulgrave Street, 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)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, it is a 'Project'. Proceed to Q2.
	<input type="checkbox"/> 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)?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, it is a Class specified in Part 1. EIA is mandatory. No Screening required. EIAR to be requested. Discuss with ADP.	State the Class here
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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?	
<input type="checkbox"/> No, the development is not of a Class Specified in Part 2, Schedule 5 or a prescribed	

<p>type of proposed road development under Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994.</p> <p>No Screening required.</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, the proposed development is of a Class and meets/exceeds the threshold.</p> <p>EIA is Mandatory. No Screening Required</p>	
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, the proposed development is of a Class but is sub-threshold.</p> <p>Preliminary examination required. (Form 2)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>If Schedule 7A information submitted proceed to Q4. (Form 3 Required)</p>	<p>Class 10(b)(iv) of Part 2 of Schedule 5 relates to a mandatory EIA for urban development involving 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. As the proposal is for a 7,370sqm primary care centre development on a 7.52 hectare site, it would be substantially less than the thresholds set out in Part 2 of Schedule 5 for parts of a built up area and would not fall under Class 10(b)(iv) in respect to urban development.</p>

<p>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)?</p>	
<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Pre-screening determination conclusion remains as above (Q1 to Q3)</p>

Inspector: _____ Date: _____

Form 2 - EIA Preliminary Examination

Case Reference	PL-500501-LK-25
Proposed Development Summary	Primary Care Centre, consulting rooms, Café Retail Unit, access and entrance road upgrades and all associated site works.
Development Address	St. Joseph's Hospital Campus, Mulgrave Street, Limerick
This preliminary examination should be read with, and in the light of, the rest of the Inspector's Report attached herewith.	
<p>Characteristics of proposed development</p> <p>(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).</p>	<p>The site lies within the settlement boundary of Limerick City. Surrounding land uses are a mix of residential, healthcare and commercial uses. It is not considered that any significant cumulative environmental impacts will result when considered in cumulation with existing developments.</p> <p>There are no demolition works involved, and there are no identified risks of accidents or disaster, nor is there any obvious risks to human health that result from the proposed development.</p> <p>The proposed development will not give rise to the production of significant waste, emissions or pollutants.</p>
<p>Location of development</p> <p>(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).</p>	<p>The proposed development would be in keeping with the mixed use and health care nature of adjacent developments.</p> <p>The site is not located within any designated site. The closest Natura 2000 sites is Lower River Shannon SAC (site code 002165), located 1.1km to the north.</p> <p>The site is bounded by a vacant strip of land to the north, existing residential the east, existing hospital to the west and vacant land to the south that has permission for healthcare uses.</p> <p>The proposal would not have the potential to affect other significant environmental sensitivities in the area.</p> <p>While there will be some loss of existing grassland on site, there is no evidence on file that the site is of particular ecological value, nor is there evidence that the site of particular ecological value for any species, and I am satisfied that there will be no significant effects on biodiversity.</p> <p>The site has not been identified as of particular historic, cultural or archaeological significance and adequate mitigation measures are in place to protect the architectural and archaeological heritage</p>

	associated with the historical context of St. Joseph's Hospital.
Types and characteristics of potential impacts (Likely significant effects on environmental parameters, magnitude and spatial extent, nature of impact, transboundary, intensity and complexity, duration, cumulative effects and opportunities for mitigation).	The scale of the proposed development is not significant in the context of existing development in the surrounding area. During the construction phase noise, dust and vibration emissions are likely. However, any impacts would be local and temporary in nature and the implementation of standard construction practice measures would satisfactorily mitigate potential impacts. Impacts on the surrounding road network at construction stage can be mitigated by way of adherence to a Construction Management Plan. No significant impacts on the surrounding road network are considered likely at operational stage, with mitigation proposed through road upgrades in the application
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)

**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 a Primary Care Centre, consulting rooms, retail café and all associated site works.
Brief description of development of site characteristics and potential impact mechanisms	Infill development on 7.52ha site. Site in natural grass state, existing natural and constructed boundaries, located c 1.1km to European site, minimal potential impact on ground water from effluent disposal and disposal of surface water, removal of natural vegetation may disturb species, planting proposed. The River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA (Site Code: 004077) is located 1.5km north of the site and Lower River Shannon SAC (Site Code: 002165) located 1.1km north of the site.
Screening report	Yes.
Natura Impact Statement	No.
Relevant submissions	No reference to European sites in submissions.

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

Two European sites are identified as being located within a potential zone of influence of the proposed development as detailed in Table 1 below. I note that no further range of European Sites is necessary for consideration in relation to this proposed development.

Table 1:

European Site (code)	Qualifying interests¹ Link to conservation objectives (NPWS, date)	Distance from proposed development (km)	Ecological connections²	Consider further in screening³ Y/N
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]	1.5km north	No physical or hydrological pathways	Y

Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048]			
Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052]			
Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054]			
Scaup (<i>Aythya marila</i>) [A062]			
Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137]			
Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140]			
Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141]			
Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142]			
Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143]			
Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149]			
Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156]			
Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157]			
Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160]			
Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162]			

		<p>Greenshank (<i>Tringa nebularia</i>) [A164]</p> <p>Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179]</p> <p>Wigeon (<i>Mareca penelope</i>) [A855]</p> <p>Shoveler (<i>Spatula clypeata</i>) [A857]</p> <p>Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</p> <p>River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA National Parks & Wildlife Service</p>			
Lower Shannon (002165)	River SAC	<p>Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time [1110]</p> <p>Estuaries [1130]</p> <p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]</p> <p>Coastal lagoons [1150]</p> <p>Large shallow inlets and bays [1160]</p> <p>Reefs [1170]</p> <p>Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220]</p> <p>Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]</p> <p>Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]</p> <p>Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330]</p>	1.1km north	No physical hydrological pathways or	Y

	<p>Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410]</p> <p>Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculus fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260]</p> <p>Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410]</p> <p>Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0]</p> <p><i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029]</p> <p><i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey) [1095]</p> <p><i>Lampetra planeri</i> (Brook Lamprey) [1096]</p> <p><i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> (River Lamprey) [1099]</p> <p><i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106]</p> <p><i>Tursiops truncatus</i> (Common Bottlenose Dolphin) [1349]</p> <p><i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]</p> <p>Lower River Shannon SAC National Parks & Wildlife Service</p>			
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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

Given the separation distances involved to the European Sites detailed above, potential effects are not likely to occur as a result of the proposed development.

Significant effects from other pathways have been ruled out i.e., habitat loss, spread of invasive species, impacts from noise and disturbance.

Step 3. Describe the likely effects of the project (if any, alone or in combination) on European Sites

The proposed development will not result in any direct effects on any SPA or SAC. However, due to the application of the precautionary principle, impacts generated by the construction and operation of the proposed development require consideration.

Sources of impact and likely significant effects are detailed in the table below.

AA Screening matrix

Site name Qualifying interests	Possibility of significant effects (alone) in view of the conservation objectives of the site*	
	Impacts	Effects
<p>Site 1: River Shannon and Eiver Fergus Estuaries SPA (004077)</p> <p>QI List: As above</p>	<p>No direct impacts and no risk of habitat loss, fragmentation or any other direct impact. Loss of grassland. Indirect: Low risk of surface water runoff from construction reaching sensitive receptors. Operational: surface water will be attenuated by integrated SUDs system and filtration system.</p>	<p>Having regard to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the scale of development proposed, - lack of direct connections or pathways, - the distance to receiving features, - normal best construction practices, - disposal of uncontaminated storm water to ground, - disposal of effluent on site to public sewer system, <p>it is highly unlikely that the proposed development could generate impacts of a magnitude that could affect habitat quality or QI species of the SPA.</p> <p>No significant disturbance to birds that may occasionally use the existing vegetation on the site.</p> <p>Low risk to SPA related to any minor construction related emissions.</p> <p>Low risk of surface or ground water borne pollutants or sediments reaching the SPA.</p>

		Conservation objectives would not be undermined.
	Likelihood of significant effects from proposed development (alone): N	
	If No, is there likelihood of significant effects occurring in combination with other plans or projects? The proposed development will not result in any effects that could contribute to an additive effect with other developments in the area.	
	Impacts	Effects
Site 2: Lower River Shannon SAC (002165) QI List: As Above	No direct impacts and no risk of habitat loss, fragmentation or any other direct impact. Loss of grassland. Indirect: Low risk of surface water runoff from construction reaching sensitive receptors. Operational: surface water will be attenuated by integrated SUDs system and filtration system.	Having regard to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the scale of development proposed, - lack of direct connections or pathways, - the distance to receiving features, - normal best construction practices, - disposal of uncontaminated storm water to ground, - disposal of effluent on site to public sewer system, it is highly unlikely that the proposed development could generate impacts of a magnitude that could affect QIs of the SAC. Low risk to SAC related to any minor construction related emissions. Low risk of surface or ground water borne pollutants or sediments reaching the SAC. Conservation objectives would not be undermined.
	Likelihood of significant effects from proposed development (alone): N	
	If No, is there likelihood of significant effects occurring in combination with other plans or projects? The proposed development will not result in any effects that could contribute to an additive effect with other developments in the area.	

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

The construction or operation of the proposed development will not result in impacts that could affect the conservation objectives of European Sites within the zone of influence. Due to distance and lack of meaningful ecological connections there will be no changes in ecological functions due to any construction related emissions or disturbance. There will be no direct or ex-situ effects from disturbance on mobile species during construction or operation of the proposed development. No mitigation measures beyond normal standard construction mitigation and drainage works are required to come to these conclusions.

Screening Determination

Finding of no likely significant effects

Having carried out Screening for Appropriate Assessment of the project in accordance with Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), I conclude that that the project individually or in combination with other plans or projects would not be likely to give rise to significant effects on European Sites within the surrounding area, or any other European site, in view of the sites Conservation Objectives, and Appropriate Assessment (and submission of a NIS) is not therefore required.

This determination is based on:

- The scale of the development and lack of impact mechanisms that could significantly affect a European Site
- Distance from and weak indirect connections to the European sites
- No ex-situ impacts

Appendix 3 – WFD Assessment

WFD IMPACT ASSESSMENT STAGE 1: SCREENING			
Step 1: Nature of the Project, the Site and Locality			
An Bord Pleanála ref. no.	PL-500501-LK-25	Townland, address	St. Joseph’s Hospital, Musgrave Street, Limerick
Description of project		Construction of a Primary Care Centre, Consulting Rooms, Retail Café and all associated site works.	
Brief site description, relevant to WFD Screening,		Site is located at Ballycummin Road, Raheen, Limerick. The site is relatively flat. Excess storm water will drain to the public network. A water quality monitoring station is located approx. 3km east of the site at Groody River Bridge (ID: RS25G050200) and the site is straddles the Shannon Estuary South and Lower Shannon catchments.	
Proposed surface water details		Connection to existing public network.	
Proposed water supply source & available capacity		It is proposed to connect to the existing watermain that runs through the site. Pre-connection details from Uisce Eireann were provided with the application.	
Proposed wastewater treatment system & available capacity, other issues		It is proposed to form a new connection to the public network at the northern boundary of the site. Pre-connection and capacity details from Uisce Eireann were provided with the application.	
Step 2: Identification of relevant water bodies and Step 3: S-P-R connection			

Identified water body							
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	1.1km east	SHANNON (LOWER)_060	Moderate	Review	None	Potential Surface Water run off	
Groundwater Waterbody	Underlying site	Limerick City Southwest IE_SH_G_141	Good	At Risk	Agriculture	Yes, via groundwater	
Step 4: Detailed description of any component of the development or activity that may cause a risk of not achieving the WFD Objectives having regard to the S-P-R linkage.							
CONSTRUCTION PHASE							
No.	Component	Waterbody receptor (EPA Code)	Pathway (existing and new)	Potential for impact/ what is the possible impact	Screening Stage Mitigation Measure*	Residual Risk (yes/no) Detail	Determination** to proceed to Stage 2. Is there a risk to the water environment? (if 'screened' in or 'uncertain' proceed to Stage 2.
1.	River	SHANNON (LOWER)_060	Yes. Via surface water	Siltation, pH (Concrete), hydrocarbon spillages	Standard construction practice	No. Due to separation and intervening	Screened Out

						built environment.	
2.	Ground	Limerick City Southwest IE_SH_G_141	Yes, pathway exists via moderate drainage characteristics	Spillages, leakage to groundwater water table	As above	Yes – drainage characteristics warrants further assessment.	Screened in.
OPERATIONAL PHASE							
1.	River	SHANNON (LOWER)_06 0	Yes. Surface Water.	spillage/siltation	hydro brake, attenuation tank	No. Due to separation and intervening built environment.	Screened out
2.	Ground	Limerick City Southwest IE_SH_G_141	Yes pathway exists via moderate drainage characteristics and high to extreme vulnerability	Spillages	As above	Yes. Drainage characteristics warrant further assessment	Screened in
DECOMMISSIONING PHASE							
1.	N/A						
STAGE 2: ASSESSMENT							
Details of Mitigation Required to Comply with WFD Objectives							

Groundwater				
Development/Activity e.g. abstraction, outfall, etc.	<u>Objective 1: Groundwater</u> Prevent or limit the input of pollutants into groundwater and to prevent the deterioration of the status of all bodies of groundwater	<u>Objective 2: Groundwater</u> Protect, enhance and restore all bodies of groundwater, ensure a balance between abstraction and recharge, with the aim of achieving good status*	<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 without a derogation under art. 4.7)
Development Activity 1: Development of 36no. residential units	Standard construction mitigation methods for example, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Silt traps installed • Removal of material daily from site • Dust suppression during construction • Servicing of plant and machinery to avoid leakage 	Site specific mitigation methods as described.	Site specific mitigation methods as described	Yes

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Management of refuelling• Covering of soil heaps during heavy rainfall• No excavation during rainfall• Staff compounds designated• Management of waste <p>Operational mitigation measures including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• control flow prior to discharge			
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