

The Secretary

27 March 2026

An Coimisiún Pleanála,  
64 Marlborough St.,  
Rotunda,  
Dublin 1.

**Re: Athlone link road phase 2. Proposed link road joining the Crescent Junction (R915) to Southern Station Road Junction, Athlone, Co. Westmeath – Case Number: ACP-322958-25**

Dear Secretary,

I refer to the request for further information which was issued in respect of this proposed development on 5 January 2026 and I wish to respond as follows (numbering as per the request for further information):

1. *The application Drainage Report refers to shallow channels as draining the western side of the site and the immediate areas to the north and south. This drainage report also states that the application site is on occasion subject to flooding and that despite the sizing the proposed surface water drainage infrastructure to accommodate all storm durations and intensities up to a 1:30 year storm (plus 20% climate change factor), during exceptional events in excess of this water levels may overtop the discharge control (hydrobrake) and result in short-term uncontrolled flows towards the culvert drainage west under Southern Station Road, towards an area that is noted to be prone to flooding under the Shannon Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study. The Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027, the operative statutory plan for this area, includes policy objective CPO 10.106 requiring flood assessments to be carried out for any development proposals within 200m of a watercourse and at risk of flood.*

***The applicant is requested to submit a Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment following the approach set out in “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities” (2009), including the technical Appendices.***

*Response:* The proposed surface water drainage infrastructure has now been increased to accommodate all storm durations and intensities up to a 1:100 year storm (plus 20% climate change factor). A revised Drainage Report is attached.

A Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment has been completed by PUNCH Consulting Engineers for the development and is enclosed herewith.

Westmeath County Council, in collaboration with the Office of Public Works, has installed Flood defence barriers and associated infrastructure (eg. fixed pumping installations, in-line sluice valves on surface water and sewer pipelines, mobile pumps and tanker systems) at various locations throughout Athlone Town to protect areas which have been identified to be prone to flooding under the Shannon Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study. Part of this system relates to the area downstream of this proposed development.

A Flood Response Plan has been developed by Westmeath County Council which involves monitoring water levels on the Shannon and a flood warning level has been determined for the flooding associated with the River Shannon in order to give the Council a number of days (approx. 10 days) warning before the Flood Management plan is activated. Intervention levels are set where the following actions are undertaken:

**Intervention level 1:** The closing of flood gates once water levels reach a predetermined level.

**Intervention level 2:** The activation of fixed pumps and deployment of mobile water pumps and tanker systems to over-pump and remove surface water emanating locally from the area and upstream of the flood defence barriers. These systems will remain in place until water levels have dropped sufficiently and are on a downward trend thereby allowing the re-opening of the flood gates, sluice valves and standing down the flood management procedure.

2. *Policy objective CPO14.12 of the Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027 aims to ensure that archaeological excavation is carried out in accordance with the best practice as outlined by the National Monuments Service. Notwithstanding the location of the application site outside of the historic town walls to Athlone and outside a 'zone of archaeological potential; indicated in the expired Athlone Town Development Plan 2014-2020, the National Monuments Service 'Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage' (1999) outline when archaeological assessment should be undertaken, including in the case of developments that are 'extensive in terms of area or length'. The area of works within the site on the undeveloped ground amounting to over 1 hectare is extensive in urban development terms. The National Monuments Service 'Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage' (1999) states that if archaeological assessment is appropriate, a report on the assessment, including a report on the test excavation if such was undertaken, should accompany an application to undertake a development.*

***The applicant is requested to submit an Archaeological Assessment report for the proposed development following the approach set out in 'Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage' (1999)***

*Response:* Archaeological Monitoring of 6 no. trial pits along the extent of the proposed Link Road was carried out by Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd. in March 2005 and the report for this monitoring is attached to this submission.

A more recent Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment report which includes an Archaeological Assessment has been undertaken by Moore Group for the development and this report is also enclosed herewith.

3. *Policy objectives CPO 7.1 and 7.2 of the Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027 promote the provision of quality urban design in development, including creating accessible, functional, attractive and distinctive places. The Design Manual for Urban Roads & Streets (2019) outline the need to design new roads in a manner that would encourage pedestrians and cyclists to use active travel routes. The proposed boundary wall with fence atop separating the proposed link road and the expanded bus depot, would measure a total height of 4.75m onto the link road. This boundary treatment would be out of character with boundary treatments in the immediate area and would be of excessive scale, resulting in overbearing impacts for those using the proposed link road corridor and presenting a hostile environment for pedestrians and cyclists, thus discouraging use of the respective active travel routes.*

***The applicant is requested to submit revised drawings for this boundary treatment, cognisant of the provisions set out above, including the need for a reduced height to the boundary treatment.***

*Response:* The height of the proposed boundary treatment between the proposed link road and the expanded bus depot was sought by CIE / Bus Éireann during initial discussions with them. However, this has now been reduced in agreement with CIE/ Bus Éireann. The reduction in the height is outlined on drawing 120278-725 PL3 Typical Cross Section and is enclosed herewith.

4. ***The applicant is requested to provide cross-section drawings to a stated metric scale, illustrating the context for the proposed link road and housing along The Manse and St. Francis' Terrace.***

*Response:* Drawing 120278-725 PL3 Typical Cross Section, outlines the proposed development in relation to the housing along The Manse and St. Francis' Terrace and is enclosed herewith.

5. ***The applicant is requested to provide floor plan, elevation and section drawings to a stated metric scale for the tyre store building that is proposed to be relocated within the bus depot.***

Shanette drawings "Plan View & Section" and "Elevations" to a scale of 1:50 for the existing tyre store building that is proposed to be relocated within the bus depot is enclosed herewith.

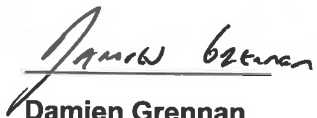
6. ***The applicant refers to calculations for the foul drainage proposals as being contained in appendix E to their Drainage Report. The applicant is requested to submit this 'appendix E', as it appears to have been omitted from the planning application.***

The revised Drainage Report (referred to in No.1 above) includes Appendix E detailing the foul drainage calculations.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact

*Damien Grennan,  
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Westmeath County Council.  
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Yours faithfully,



**Damien Grennan**  
**Senior Engineer,**  
**Westmeath County Council**

Enclosures:

- 120278 Drainage Report R4 – Drainage Design Report, March 2026
- 262119-PUNCH-XX-XX-RP-C-0001\_C01 - Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment, March 2026
- Drainage Layout - Drawing No. 120278-501 Rev.PL3
- Archaeological Monitoring Report Railway Field Link Road, May 2005,
- 26037 Athlone Link Road CHA Rev A - Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment, Proposed Athlone Link Road – Phase 2, Athlone, Co. Westmeath,
- Drawing No. 120278-725 Rev.PL3 Typical Cross Section
- Bus Éireann Tyre Store Elevations – Shanette Drawing
- Bus Éireann Tyre Store Plan & Section - Shanette Drawing